

This electronic thesis or dissertation has been downloaded from the King's Research Portal at <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/>



## **Soldiers of Christ : evangelicals and India, 1784-1833.**

Carson, Penelope Susan Elizabeth

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author and no quotation from it or information derived from it may be published without proper acknowledgement.

### **END USER LICENCE AGREEMENT**



**Unless another licence is stated on the immediately following page** this work is licensed

under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

licence. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

You are free to copy, distribute and transmit the work

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution: You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- Non Commercial: You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- No Derivative Works - You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you receive permission from the author. Your fair dealings and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

### **Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact [librarypure@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:librarypure@kcl.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

**SOLDIERS OF CHRIST: EVANGELICALS AND INDIA, 1784-1833**

Thesis submitted for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
in the University of London by  
PENELOPE SUSAN ELIZABETH CARSON  
King's College, London  
1988.



## ABSTRACT

Much scholarship has been attracted to the history of missions, yet surprisingly scant attention has been paid to the early development of British policy towards missionary activity in India. This thesis provides the first detailed and systematic analysis of this policy, charting the changes that occurred from the early eighteenth century, when SPCK-sponsored missionaries were the only Protestant missionaries in India, to 1833, when there were twelve missionary societies at work.

Central to this analysis is an examination of the inclusion of a 'pious clause', affirming Britain's duty to provide for the moral and religious improvement of India, in the Company's 1813 charter. It will be argued that this inclusion was an ambiguous 'success' for the missionary lobby. The impact of 1813 can only be assessed by taking into account the two worlds in which decisions about India were made. The first was that of domestic politics in which Dissenters, Church Evangelicals, Government and the Company pursued complex aims which evolved into the compromise of 1813. The 1813 campaign was an episode in a long-running story of inter-Church and Church-Dissent politics.

The second world was that of India. This was a world in which missionaries faced long years of toil and hostility.

Despite all efforts to the contrary, Christianity was increasingly resented by Indians as an arm of the colonial power and a threat to their religious, economic and social order. British officials were cautious in the face of this. Difficulties for the missionaries were compounded by the generally unhelpful attitudes of the new bishops, which reinforced High Church prejudices against evangelical missionaries. The 1813 political decision had little impact on the practicalities of the Indian situation and, far from being the resounding success that convention believes, was a circumscribed victory for the missionary lobby.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot commence my acknowledgements without a heart-felt thank-you to Peter Marshall, my supervisor. He has been generous with his time and advice and rigorous with his comments. These past four years have been a time of great learning and development for me. I particularly value Professor Marshall's enthusiasm and encouragement.

I also owe a great debt to Doug Peers. We have had long conversations about 'militarism' and the influence of the 'Wellesley Kindergarten'. He has saved me time in the India Office by pointing me towards relevant references. Last, but not least, he has read my final draft and made valuable comments. I have also had many useful discussions with Barbara Schwegmann and am extremely grateful to her for reading and criticising my draft. John Dinwiddy has provided helpful advice and references, not to speak of encouraging me to embark on this PhD in the first place. I thank Teotonio de Souza for directing me towards references on Catholic history, for his helpful comments on Chapter 8 and for many animated discussions on the 'imperial yoke and its aftermath'. Alan Scadding kindly proof-read my first four chapters.

I am very grateful to the Irwin Fund of London University for a grant which enabled me to research in India for three

months. This has greatly enriched chapters 3,4, 5 and 8. The trip was invaluable for helping me understand the complexities of Indian society and the problems that were faced by the early missionaries in trying to propagate Christianity. I am also grateful to the British Academy for my three-year studentship, to the Historical Fund of the Institute of Historical Research for paying for the binding and copying of this thesis, and to Epsom College for assisting me in its final production.

I should also like to thank the librarians and staff of the many archives and libraries in which I worked. I am also greatly indebted to many friends in India: to Bishop and Mrs Mani at Kottayam; to the Allenby's, Dr David and Fr Correia-Afonso in Bombay; to Fr Mathew and Rev Naidu and his family in Hyderabad; to Dr and Mrs John and Fr Kuriakose in Bangalore; to Rev Azariah in Madras; to Professor Ray, Dr John and Dinesh Dey in Calcutta and Dr Mukhopadhyay and Mr Chatterjee in Serampore.

Last, and certainly not least, I thank Hugh, my husband, for his constant encouragement and support. He has found the time in a very busy work-schedule to read numerous drafts, to help me with my maps and photocopying the thesis. He must know nearly as much about missionaries as I do now. Finally, any errors that might remain are, of course, mine alone.

## CONTENTS

Abbreviations	8
Introduction	10
1. The Wisdom of the Serpent and the Innocence of the Dove	
a. The Evangelical Army	15
b. The Early Years of British Missionary Interest	19
c. The Beginnings of Hostility: The Indian Situation	32
d. The Beginnings of Hostility: Changes in Britain	37
e. A Missionary Proposal for Bengal	39
2. The 1790s: A Time of Crisis	
a. The 1793 Renewal of the East India Company's Charter	51
b. The Impact of the French Revolution	
i In Britain	60
ii The Haldane Mission Proposal	63
iii On Evangelicals	68
iv On India	76
3. Missionary Activity in India 1793-1806	
a. North India	91
b. South India	107
4. The Vellore Mutiny	117
5. The Troubled Years: 1807-12	
a. The Persian Pamphlet Controversy	159
b. Missionaries and the Company, 1807-12	177
c. Church/Dissent Rivalry	187
6. The 1813 Renewal of the Company's Charter	
a. The Ground Laid	197
b. The Parliamentary Battle	213
c. The Battle Won: Whose Victory	238
7. Missions, Dissent and People: The Politics of Pressure	
a. The Popular Appeal of Missions	254
b. The Mobilisation of the People	
i Publicity	260
ii The B&FBS: A society for All?	266
c. Missions, Dissent and Government	270
d. The Petitioning Campaign, April-June 1813	283
e. Trade and Christianity: An Alliance Against Monopoly?	297

f. Conclusion	301
8. The Walls of Jericho: Missionaries and India, 1813-1833.	
a. The Court of Directors	310
b. The Evangelical View	319
c. Bengal Presidency	322
d. Bombay Presidency	335
e. Madras Presidency	
i Tinnevely	340
ii Travancore	346
iii Mysore	359
iv Tranquebar, Madras and the Northern Circars	364
Conclusion: Ezekiel's Dry Bones	387
Appendices	
1. Map of Mission Stations 1813	400
2. Map of Mission Stations 1833	401
3. List of Missionaries 1706-1833	402
4. Chronology of Events 1812-13	409
5. Extracts from 53.GIII.c.155	411
6. Petitions April-June 1813	412
Bibliography	413

## ABBREVIATIONS

a. General

Add MSS	Additional Manuscripts
AL	Angus Library
B&FBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BCL	Bristol City Library
BL	British Library
Bod	Bodleian Library
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CSBC	College Street Baptist Church
<u>CJ</u>	<u>Commons Journals</u>
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DRO	Devon Record Office
Eur	European
EUL	Edinburgh University Library
DUL	Durham University Library
IOL	India Office Library
IOR	India Office Records
LMS	[London] Missionary Society
MS[S]	Manuscript[s]
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NLW	National Library of Wales
NRO	Northants Record Office
NUL	Nottingham University Library
<u>PA</u>	<u>Periodical Accounts</u>
<u>PD</u>	<u>The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803,</u>
<u>PP</u>	<u>Parliamentary Papers</u>
PSPRL	Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty
RTS	Religious Tract Society
SMS	Scottish Missionary Society
SPCK	Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society

b. Abbreviations for India Office Records

H/Misc	Home Miscellaneous
L/Parl	Parliamentary
L/PS	Political and Secret
BPC	Bengal Public Consultations
BSC	Bengal Secret Consultations
MPC	Madras Public Consultations
MSC	Madras Secret Consultations
BomPC	Bombay Public Consultations
BomSC	Bombay Secret Consultations
Eccles	Ecclesiastical

### c. Abbreviations for the [London] Missionary Society MSS

The Missionary Society did not change its name to the London Missionary Society until 1818. Common usage is to refer to it as the London Missionary Society or the LMS regardless of date. In this thesis I shall use the term Missionary Society when that is the correct name chronologically, and LMS as the abbreviation, despite the date.

The LMS MSS are stored in jackets, within folders, in boxes. The references will be cited as follows: 1/1/A, meaning Box 1, Folder 1, Jacket A. The LMS titles have been abbreviated as follows:

B	Bengal
Can	Canarese
E	Extra
Gen	General
Guj	Gujerat
E	Extra
HO	Home Office
E	Extra
I	Incoming
NI	North India
SI	South India
Tam	Tamil
Tel	Telugu
Trav	Travancore
UP	United Provinces

### Style

Punctuation in quotations from primary sources has been regularised and many capital letters have been rendered in the lower case. Archaic spelling and spelling errors in quotations have been retained. In order to cause as little confusion as possible to non-Indian scholars, spellings of Indian place names have been rendered in the general usage of the time. For convenience, the term 'North India' has been used to cover the area of Bengal presidency, the United Provinces and the Punjab. 'South India' covers all the territory included in the Bombay and Madras presidencies.

## INTRODUCTION

For all the scholarship attracted to the history of missions, surprisingly scant attention has been paid to the development of British policy towards missionary activity in India in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. J W Kaye established what was long regarded as the standard account in 1859.<sup>1</sup> Although recent writing has transformed our understanding of missionary history, many of Kaye's assumptions about official policy remain unquestioned. Stephen Neill's posthumously published History of Christianity in India is the most up-to-date and perceptive work so far but covers too much ground to give any detailed insights into the policies pursued by the East India Company and the British government. Its focus is on events in India and necessarily ignores the impact of developments in Britain on the course of missionary activity.<sup>2</sup> Alan Davidson's work on the British missionary movement's attitudes towards India is more wide-ranging than the title would suggest. It provides much detail which throws light on the development of Company and Government policy towards the Protestant missionaries who were seeking to work in India from the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Bradley, Brown and Howse examine the question purely as an aspect of Church Evangelical involvement in British politics.<sup>4</sup> Other secondary works also deal with limited aspects of missionary activity in

India. Embree's Charles Grant and British Rule in India discusses the key figure in promoting interest in India as a Protestant missionary field.<sup>5</sup> Piggin and Potter concern themselves with the recruitment and training of missionaries for India.<sup>6</sup> Other important secondary sources confine themselves to events in Bengal. Potts has written an excellent work on the British Baptists in Bengal and Laird's work deals with missionary education there.<sup>7</sup> Sen Gupta has written a less satisfactory history of Christian missionaries in Bengal.<sup>8</sup>

This thesis, therefore, is the first detailed and systematic analysis of the development of policy towards Protestant missionary activity in India at a time when British evangelicals were pushing hard to force the Company and then the Government to do more for Christianity in India. The thesis charts the changes that occurred from the early eighteenth century, when the SPCK-sponsored missionaries were the only Protestant missionaries operating in British India, to 1833 when the Protestant missionaries came from three Anglican societies, two Scottish societies, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, a Dutch and an American society and the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. Central to this analysis is an examination of the inclusion of a 'pious clause' in the Company's 1813



charter, which affirmed Britain's duty to provide for the moral and religious improvement of India.

Before 1780 neither the British government nor the East India Company needed to have a formal policy on missionary activity in India. Britain owned little Indian territory and very few missionaries, Catholic or Protestant, operated within its spheres of influence. However, after 1780, as the Company assumed sovereignty over a vast portion of the Indian sub-continent, attitudes towards missionary activity appeared to change. A struggle developed between those who believed that Britain had a moral and religious duty to propagate Christianity to its new subjects and those who feared that, now Britain was a sovereign power in India, an appearance of undue government support of missionary activity might lead to disaffection or, ultimately, even rebellion.

The struggle, however, was wider than a simple question of whether or not missionaries should be permitted to operate in India. It was also a question of a challenge to the SPCK monopoly of missionary activity in India. The new evangelical missionary societies, most of which were Dissenting in composition, were determined to break this monopoly. This put the question of missionary activity in India firmly as part of the contemporaneous campaign in

Britain for religious freedom, a point which is usually overlooked and has never been adequately examined.

The accepted view is that the inclusion of a 'pious clause' in the Company's 1813 charter was a great victory for the missionary lobby.<sup>9</sup> The following chapters challenge this view, demonstrating the relative unimportance of 1813 in shaping the Company's policy towards missionary activity while acknowledging its impact in giving heart to the missionary movement. In order to demonstrate this argument two themes are developed. The first is the essential continuity of policy both before and after 1813. The second is the role of religious and political developments in England in shaping both the missionary movement itself and government and Company policy towards it. Decisions about India were made in two very different worlds. The first was that of politics in Britain in which Dissenters and Church Evangelicals, Government and Company pursued complex aims which evolved into the compromise of 1813 with something for everyone. The second world was in India, where missionaries faced years of almost fruitless toil in the face of Indian hostility and the continuing caution of Company officials.

Notes to Introduction

1. J W Kaye, History of Christianity in India, London, 1859.
2. S Neill, A History of Christianity in India 1707-1858, Cambridge, 1985.
3. A K Davidson, unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Development and Influence of the British Missionary Movement's Attitude to India 1786-1830', Aberdeen, 1973.
4. I Bradley, unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Politics of Godliness: Evangelicals in Parliament 1784-1832', Oxford, 1974; F K Brown, Fathers of the Victorians, Oxford, 1961; E M Howse, Saints in Politics, Toronto, 1952.
5. A T Embree, Charles Grant and British Rule in India, London 1962.
6. F S Piggin, Making Evangelical Missionaries 1789-1858, Sutton Courtenay, 1984; S C Potter, unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Social Origins and Recruitment of English Protestant Missionaries in the Nineteenth Century', London 1975
7. E D Potts, British Baptist Missionaries in India, Cambridge 1967; M A Laird, Missionaries and Education in Bengal 1793-1837, London 1972.
8. K P Sen Gupta, unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Christian Missionaries in Bengal', London, 1966.
9. 53.Geo.III.c.155.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE WISDOM OF THE SERPENT AND THE INNOCENCE OF THE DOVE

#### a. The Evangelical Army

Thomas Gisborne used an apt analogy when he described the evangelicals' who united in the missionary movement as "parallel columns of a combined army, marching onward, side by side, for the subjugation of a common foe."<sup>2</sup> The common foe, Satan, in the guise of 'heathenism' at home and abroad, permitted the cooperation of 'regiments' of Christians across a wide spectrum of doctrine and practice. Who were these 'evangelicals' to be found in the Church of England, the independent churches and amongst the Baptists? The 'evangel' or 'good news' is, of course, the Gospel. The word 'evangelical' came into wide use in the late eighteenth century and, along with the term 'methodist', was usually used pejoratively of anyone who seemed to be 'over-enthusiastic' in his Christianity. Calvinist and Arminian Methodists and adherents of 'New Dissent'<sup>3</sup> came into this category. The term 'Evangelical' was also used to refer to a 'party' within the Church of England which was growing in numbers and influence by the end of the eighteenth century. William Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect were the most famous of these Church Evangelicals.<sup>4</sup>

All evangelicals strove towards the highest standards of piety and personal morality. Apart from the Wesleyan Methodists, most evangelicals operated within the framework of Calvinist theology. Christianity stood at the centre of their lives: they were 'vital' not 'nominal' Christians. A mark of the evangelical was his personal experience of conversion. This was a definite act, at a specific moment, in which Christ was accepted as Saviour. It involved a total surrender to His will and His Word as found in the Bible was regarded as the supreme authority in all matters of faith and morals.

The evangelicals who became involved in the missionary movement were 'hungry for souls' and took to heart Christ's command to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations". [Matt XXVIII.19] The softening of 'High Calvinism' that occurred at about this time undoubtedly gave an impetus to the missionary movement because it stressed the importance of God's offer of Grace to all men and the corresponding duty to ensure that all men knew of His offer. The emphasis therefore was on evangelism, on the Word as an inducement to conversion. The eighteenth century saw the growth of a sense of urgency in the biblical appeal to conversion. The reasons for this will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

This drive to propagate the Gospel in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries arose not merely from a sense of duty but also from a spirit of love, a love that was a grateful response to the love of God in sending Christ to save mankind. It was far more than humanitarian disgust and pity at 'heathen' habits; it was a response to the love of Christ for sinners. Saving souls from eternal death was the most important act of love for evangelicals. This led them to take their places as the leaders of a 'missionary movement', one side of which concentrated on the 'heathen' at home and the other which concentrated on the 'heathen' abroad.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the great unity of heart that undoubtedly existed between evangelicals, they also had the pride of soldiers in their own denominations and, as with military regiments, great rivalry could ensue between them, especially when one was seen to be encroaching on the domain of another. In order to appreciate the complexities of the dissension over the propagation of Christianity in India, it is essential to understand the tensions and differences in ethos between the various groups of British evangelicals. While all evangelicals looked back to the primitive, apostolic purity and zeal of the early Christian church and the simplicity and vitality of the Puritan tradition, Church evangelicalism was a more restrained phenomenon. Church Evangelicals were at one with the

mainstream of the Established Church in their dislike of 'enthusiasm'. They mistrusted the hysteria that sometimes accompanied Methodist and Dissenting evangelicalism and most were not prepared to disrupt church order. They disapproved of the use of ill-educated lay-preachers, supported the episcopacy and believed in the Church of England's role as the established church of the state. They were further distanced from other evangelicals by their tendency to hold higher positions in society.

The question of church order was usually the greatest stumbling block to unity within the missionary movement. When it was merely a question of distributing the Bible and moral literature, most Protestants felt they could cooperate in the task. When, however, it was a question of gaining converts and building them into a church, it was difficult to ignore the problem of church order. Each denomination believed its own particular version of Christianity was best and attempts by members of other denominations to control or hinder progress were resisted. There was as much denominational rivalry as there was ecumenism in the campaign to open India to Christianity and the tensions can be seen at different points in the campaign and particularly strongly in the petitions that were sent to Parliament in 1813. A victory or defeat over who could send missionaries to India could be seen as a shift in the balance at home. From 1811, with the

formation of the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, New Dissent took the lead in the struggle for religious liberty. It was also New Dissent that wanted the right to work in India.

b. The Early Years of British Missionary Interest

Overseas missionary activity in the eighteenth century differed from earlier attempts to convert non-believers and reflected changes that were slowly taking place in relationships between church and state. Earlier Catholic empires had imposed Catholicism on their conquered territories, asserting the state's duty to bring the benefits of Christianity to subject peoples in order to further the progress of the 'Corpus Christianum'. Protestant Britain, in contrast, regarded missionary work as primarily the responsibility of private individuals. The first stirring of British interest in propagating Christianity in India seems to have occurred in 1694 when Humphrey Prideaux [later Dean of Norwich] put forward a detailed suggestion recommending India as a field for government-supported missionary activity.<sup>6</sup> He combined this with a plan for a self-sufficient Anglican ecclesiastical establishment to meet the needs of Englishmen there. He pointed out that the English East India Company was declining while the Dutch Company was thriving and attributed this to God's curse on Britain for neglecting the progress of Christianity. To some extent,



Prideaux' suggestions were taken up in the Company's 1698 charter. Chaplains were appointed to the principal stations and the Act further recommended that ministers sent to India "should apply themselves to learn the native language of the country, . . . the better to enable them to instruct the Gentoos that shall be servants or slaves of the Companys . . . in the Protestant religion."<sup>7</sup>

Prideaux was not alone in thinking about the importance of the propagation of the Gospel abroad at this time and in 1698 and 1701 the first British missionary societies were formed: the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The SPG was incorporated by royal charter to operate in Britain's colonies while the SPCK was a private society. Both societies were patronised by the secular and religious establishment and as such can be regarded as a half-way house between the government-patronised Catholic societies of continental Europe and the Protestant voluntary societies of late eighteenth century Britain. The SPCK concentrated its efforts at home but, encouraged by the work of some Lutheran missionaries who arrived in India in 1706, it also took an interest in India.

This Protestant interest was very late in the field. There was already a large Christian population in India by

the time the East India Company commenced operations in 1600. St Thomas is said to have arrived in the first century AD and Christians are known to have existed, mainly on the Malabar coast, from very early times. Catholic missionary activity became energetic with the arrival of Francis Xavier in the sixteenth century and Robert de Nobili in the seventeenth century. It has been estimated that there were perhaps two million Catholic Christians in India and Ceylon by 1700. Eighty percent of these Christians lived in Goa, Malabar and on the Fisher Coast. However, there were also large numbers of Catholics in the Company's territories.®

In theory, the Company was Protestant and hostile to 'popery'. In practice, however, the many Catholics resident in its territories led it to adopt a pragmatic policy of toleration and, to some extent, support of Catholicism. As far as Bombay was concerned, the Company had a legal requirement to tolerate Catholicism. The 1669 cession from Portugal to England had been carried out on the assurance that its Roman Catholics would have full enjoyment of their privileges and free exercise of their religion.® Mixed Portuguese Catholics also resided in other parts of British-controlled India. Although the Company Direction resented the necessity, its servants in India felt that it would be counter-productive to alienate such large numbers and also valued their knowledge of

Indian languages and customs. In Madras, as inducements to help the Company, Sir Archibald Campbell, governor 1786-1789, offered Catholics land for houses and assured them of the free exercise of their religion, together with the services of a priest. Through these 'inducements' he hoped to ensure that the French would not "possess superior influence" over Catholics residing in British territory because of their common religion with the French. Campbell was following a long tradition when he decided that the large numbers of Roman Catholics in the vicinity of Madras could best be attached to the Company's interest by allowing them to practise their religion.<sup>10</sup>

This concern to ensure the loyalty of the Catholic population did not, however, mean that the activities of the Roman Catholic priests were unrestricted. Various officials tried to prevent priests from making new converts amongst the European population. As early as 1715 the Company decided that the priests subject to the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa were politically suspect and therefore expelled them. The Padroado clergy were replaced by the more politically acceptable Carmelites from Surat, who were subject to the jurisdiction of the Vatican.<sup>11</sup> Similarly the Padroado clergy were expelled from Madras and replaced by Capuchins, the Court of Directors telling the Madras government that "the Capuchins now with you are in your interest and will not secretly endeavour to do

you mischief". Missionaries were not allowed to work in British territory without the permission of the Company and had to take an oath swearing "implicit obedience to his Britannic Majesty"<sup>12</sup>.

The Company's position on religious matters was clearly stated in 1744 when the Madras government was informed that "the Church must never be independent [of] the state, nor the French suffered to intermeddle in our affairs."<sup>13</sup> By 1786, when the French were considered to be more of a threat than the Portuguese and Portuguese diplomatic pressure was being brought to bear, jurisdiction was returned to Goa. Later, during the French Wars, Italian missionaries also came under suspicion.

Political, rather than religious considerations were paramount as far as the Company was concerned. Catholic missionary activity in the Company's territories therefore was never completely unrestricted, although great freedom was permitted. Above all, the Company wanted to ensure the loyalty of the inhabitants of its territories. For similar reasons, it was also Company policy to tolerate Indian religions. The merchants wanted trade to be carried on as smoothly as possible in a land where they were vastly outnumbered. A pragmatic policy of 'toleration' for all religions in India therefore evolved. Such a policy recognised the reality of the early Company's vulnerability

and its fears of alienating Indian rulers, but it was also elevated into a principle. Englishmen liked to contrast their own 'tolerance' with what they took to be the 'persecution' of the Portuguese. Maxims about the Company's obligations to 'tolerate' Indian religions were to have a very long life.

It was against this background that Protestant missionary activity began in India in 1706 when a mission was started in Tranquebar under the patronage of the Danish king, Frederick IV. The missionaries soon began to work in British territory, largely because of the difficulties they faced in Tranquebar. These difficulties presaged the problems that would face the English Protestant missionaries when they arrived in Bengal at the end of the eighteenth century. The Royal Danish missionaries had not been made welcome in the Danish colony. The chaplains resented their presence and the commandant had no respect for them, calling them "ruffians, fit for the gallows". The missionaries complained that they were "hindered in everything". At times they were forbidden from conducting Bible classes and even from taking services in the Church. Some of their catechumens were prevented from entering the Church. The nadir came when, after a dispute with the authorities, Ziegenbalg and Plutschau were imprisoned for four months in 1708-9. The situation was no better from the Indian end. The population was, on the whole, either

apathetic or positively antipathetic to the efforts of the missionaries. Proselytes were persecuted and driven from their homes.<sup>14</sup> Grundler, a later Tranquebar missionary, told the secretary of the Mission council in Copenhagen of the "absolute prohibition of local rulers of any Christian activity carried out by foreigners in their dominions".<sup>15</sup> The bad example of the Europeans, shortage of money and men, open violence and secret intrigues, on top of the hostility of many Indians to their efforts, made it very difficult to gain converts. In 1720, after fourteen years work, they had a Christian community of 250.<sup>16</sup>

Fortunately for the course of Protestant missionary activity in India, the English authorities did not hold the same view of their character and work as the local Danish officials. The Danish missionaries were greatly helped in gaining acceptance through the support given by the Company chaplains and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. The Society had become interested in India as a field of action after reading the reports sent back to Europe from Tranquebar.<sup>17</sup> The SPCK at first hoped to send out English missionaries. No Englishmen, however, were prepared to come forward. Thus there was at the outset a problem which remained critical for all the English missionary societies: that of recruitment. This was a far more important factor in restricting missionary work in India than any of the limitations placed on their

activities by the East India Company. Indeed, the SPCK failed to supply one effective English missionary for the whole century in which it was involved in India, but continued to rely for help on the Danes at Tranquebar and on other European countries.

The Company chaplain of Fort St George in 1712 encouraged the SPCK to give financial support to the work of the Danish missionaries. The chaplain told the SPCK that:

The missionaries at Tranquebar ought to be and must be encouraged. It is the first attempt the Protestants ever have made in that kind. We must not put out the smoking flax. It would give our adversaries, the papists . . . too much cause to triumph over us.<sup>18</sup>

Dislike of Catholicism, and a desire to limit its influence in the Company's settlements, helped the Protestant missionaries gain acceptance. Although the Company felt it had to tolerate Catholicism for the pragmatic reasons discussed earlier, it was not against conversions to Protestantism, if they could be achieved. Any inroads the missionaries could make on the dominance of Catholic Christianity in India were highly acceptable.

On the strength of the chaplain's recommendation, the SPCK appealed to the directors of the East India Company to protect and encourage the missionaries and to permit them to establish a charitable school at Madras. The request for protection was important. The hostility of many Hindus

and Muslims and their persecution of Christian converts, seemed to prove that the acceptance and protection of the Company was vital to the success of the work. This was also the opinion of the Rev Mr Stevenson, chaplain at Fort St George, who, in a letter to the SPCK in 1716, stressed that if "the itinerant missionaries, catechists &c" were not to be "molested nor interrupted in their work, they must be powerfully recommended to the favour and protection of the governors at Fort St George and Tranquebar".<sup>19</sup>

The Court of Directors agreed that missionary work was a "noble enterprise" and its subsequent despatch to Madras told the Governor and Council to "do whatever you think proper for the strengthening their hands in this difficult but honourable work of spreading the Gospel among the heathens". The official reply of the Governor-in-Council to the Court's exhortations said that it was happy to give pecuniary support and was sure that others would do the same, provided the missionaries were of "tempers and qualifications fit for the undertaking".<sup>20</sup> In 1715, the Governor of Fort St George invited the Tranquebar missionaries to work in his territory, promising that there would be no impediment from the government. The requirement that the missionaries be of good conduct and character was reiterated in a Court Despatch of 1728 in response to another request through the SPCK to start a mission in Madras. This was granted "upon supposition that



they behave respectfully and suitable to the rules of the place".<sup>21</sup> This is a significant caveat, which remained Company policy throughout the eighteenth century and did not change in 1813. The Company zealously protected its right, granted by Parliament, to expel any person it considered unfit. The SPCK made no comment on this and the matter was never put to the test as none of their missionaries were ever asked to leave by the Company. The requirement, however, later became a source of friction between the Company and the evangelical missionary societies wishing to work in India. The new societies believed that 'worldly politicians' were not the people to make such a judgement. The propagation of Christianity throughout the world was to them a positive command of God, which could not be hindered by man.

Of course, the definition of what constituted 'fitness' was very subjective and, put in crude terms, hinged on perceptions of who was considered 'respectable' at the time. Anyone wishing to be licensed to reside and work in India had to be deemed 'respectable' (or 'fit') by the officials of the East India Company, both in England and in India. The Danish missionaries patronised by the SPCK seem automatically to have been considered respectable. They were men of learning and had royal patronage. Their conduct in India reinforced their initial acceptance and they gained the respect of the Company chaplains and the

SPCK. As representatives of the Established Church of England, the Society and the Company chaplains held the key to the acceptance or non-acceptance of the missionaries.

Missionaries were also useful to the Company and this must have been an important factor in gaining them acceptance and standing in the local community. As there were far too few Company chaplains to minister to the needs of the Europeans, the missionaries were willing to perform essential religious services. They also set up charity schools and hospitals for the indigent European and the mixed European population. The pressing needs of the Europeans posed a great dilemma for many of the missionaries for the whole of the period under examination. Concentration on this inevitably restricted their work amongst the Indian people and was the cause of much heart-searching and controversy. Yet, because the Company paid them for their services, it provided much needed money which, in turn, enabled them to do more work amongst the 'heathen'.

In 1728, the SPCK took on some of the Tranquebar missionaries as its official agents and by 1740 missionary work was well established and replacement of deceased or retired individuals had become routine. In 1744, a despatch from the Directors stated that, as the SPCK had represented

that there are some vacancys by the removal of missionaries on your coast, we have permitted the Rev Mr Klein and the Rev Mr Breithaupt to take passage upon this ship, in order to carry on that good work among the Indians.<sup>22</sup>

By 1752, the Court of Directors was so convinced of the good effects of missionary work in India that it informed the governor of Madras that:

As a further encouragement to the said missionaries to exert themselves in propagating the Protestant religion, we hereby empower you to give them, at such time as you shall think proper, in our name, any sum of money, not exceeding 500 pagodas, to be laid out in such manner and appropriated to such uses as you shall approve of. And you are hereby directed to give us from time to time an account of the progress made by them in educating children and increasing the Protestant religion, together with your opinion on their conduct in general, and what further encouragement they deserve.<sup>23</sup>

In other words, at least seventy years before 1813, the Company had approved the principle of missionary work, and was prepared to support it financially. Nevertheless, this was not a blank cheque but subject to the good behaviour of the missionaries in the eyes of their local officials.

So far all the discussion has been about missionary activity in the south of India because there was little Protestant missionary interest in the north prior to 1793. John Kiernander, the first Protestant missionary to arrive in Calcutta, was invited there by Lord Clive after Cuddalore had been taken over by the French.<sup>24</sup> Kiernander laboured in the neighbourhood of Calcutta from 1758-1788,

mainly among the Catholic mixed population. During this time, there were also Moravians in the Danish enclave of Serampore. In 1789, the SPCK sent out its first English missionary, Abraham Clarke who, it appears, did no missionary work at all, preferring to accept a Company chaplaincy. It took the Society a further eight years to find another missionary willing to work in the north, William Ringeltaube, a German attached to the Royal Danish Mission and he only lasted a year in the Society's employ.

A constant problem for the SPCK was lack of funds and in 1771 it was "emboldened to ask for assistance by the many and repeated instances of good-will and affection to their Protestant Missions in East India". This petition bears repeating because it demonstrates that the Society felt that the Company would respond best to arguments of expediency: that Christianity would unite Indians to the British and thus provide a bulwark against the French and that the missionaries provided useful services in the Company's settlements.

In this urgent necessity therefore they thought themselves of soliciting the Honourable East India Company for their encouragement and assistance in an undertaking which tends so manifestly to the advancement of the glory of God, at the same time that it eventually conduces to the good and benefit of the East India Company. For, besides promoting Christian knowledge among the natives, who as they become more acquainted with our religion, will be likewise united in a more close and friendly manner with our settlers; the missionaries are successfully employed in making converts from Popery, and thereby contribute in some measure

towards the establishment and furtherance of the Protestant interest in those parts: whilst, in the midst of their labours, they are always ready to minister to the spiritual wants of the Europeans, and to render every other service in their power to the Company's settlements; for which they have been frequently honoured with singular marks of favour from the several governors abroad . . . .<sup>25</sup>

The Company agreed to pay them 500 pagodas. This is significant because it demonstrates that, as late as 1771, the Company was prepared to help these missionaries financially, seemingly without adverse comment. The petition also sets out the principal argument which the Evangelical Charles Grant was to use a few years later to urge Government to do more for Christianity in India: that Christianity would provide a bond between rulers and ruled.

#### c. The Beginnings of Hostility: The Indian Situation

The East India Company did not appear to take issue with the arguments of the petition in 1771. It provided some financial help and the SPCK missionaries carried on quietly and with acceptance in India. Their activities were limited only by a chronic shortage of money and men. It is very often forgotten that, without the material encouragement the Company was prepared to give the SPCK, missionaries in India would scarcely have been able to operate at all. The Company granted the missionaries free passages, a free mail service, and allowances for

performing divine service and running charity schools and asylums. It also helped with land and buildings. All this greatly reduced the missionaries' financial burdens.

The Company continued to give this positive help to the SPCK throughout the time of its operations in India but the situation was not so straightforward for missionary proposals put forward by other individuals and societies in the late eighteenth century. This seemed to usher in a new phase in relations between the East India Company and missionaries. None of the new proposers were granted licences to work in India, although once their missionaries had settled illegally there, they were given a considerable degree of countenance and help by Company officials.

Those anxious to propagate Christianity felt that the Company had become hostile to missionary activity.

Charles Grant, who held the post of chairman or deputy chairman of the Company for many years, spoke frequently of the antipathy of Company officials towards missionaries, as do others. One must therefore accept that there is some truth in this assertion. Nevertheless, evidence of hostility is hard to find for the period before 1813. The very few occasions that missionary activity was restricted by Company officials seem not unreasonable when regarded in terms of the legality of the missionaries' actions or possible dangers to the stability of the Company's Indian possessions.

Two developments, one in India and one in England, seem to have influenced opinions on the propagation of Christianity in India. The most significant of these was the great change in the Indian situation in the years after the Battle of Plassey. By the 1780s, India had become a national concern and the East India Company had become a sovereign as well as a commercial power. The opening of this vast territory turned the thoughts of many Christians to the possibilities of spreading the Word to Britain's Indian subjects. Thomas Coke, the Methodist leader, led the way with his 1783 plan for an Indian mission, which he communicated to Charles Grant, at that time a member of the Board of Trade at Calcutta. The following year Richard Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, in a sermon before the House of Lords, urged the propagation of Christianity in India as did Joseph White in his Bampton Lectures. In 1786 Thurlow, the Bishop of Lincoln, preached a sermon before the SPG pointing out the great prospects for the evangelisation of India. However, most important of all for future events in India, was Charles Grant's scheme for a mission in India, to be financed by the Company and implemented by the Church of England.<sup>26</sup>

The changed situation worked both to the advantage and the disadvantage of those wishing to prosecute missionary activity in India. On the one hand, Parliament's greater control over the activities of the East India Company meant

that public pressure could be brought into play to a far greater degree than in the past. The hope that India would bring great wealth to Britain was justified by the rhetoric that, in return, Britain would look after the welfare of its native inhabitants. The 'missionary movement' made use of this new sense of responsibility for the welfare of the people of India to argue that it was in everyone's best interests to instruct them in the principles of Christianity.

On the other hand, the new circumstances brought new dangers to the burgeoning missionary movement because the Company's attitude towards those wishing to live and work in India seems to have hardened. Parliament's control over the activities of the East India Company did not extend to the licensing of individuals to reside there. The Company had always insisted on the right to determine who should enter its domains and it maintained this right with increasing vehemence from the late eighteenth century. Almost annual instructions to send home unlicensed persons were issued. The Company's aim was to limit commercial competition and to keep out 'undesirable' Europeans who might disturb the status quo. It feared, to some extent legitimately, that the disreputable character of many of the interlopers who managed to find their way to India, would lower Europeans in the eyes of the people. Lord Cornwallis, governor-general from 1786-1793, was one who



believed that there were too many Europeans in India and that there was a need for more control.<sup>27</sup>

Concern for the security of British India was never far from the minds of the men responsible for its government and appears countless times in both private letters and public pronouncements. The French were always ready to foment trouble and lack of money and men dictated that British India be defended by a mainly sepoy army. Lord Cornwallis, in a letter to Henry Dundas, president of the Board of Control, spoke of his concern about the management of the sepoys. He stressed the need for good officers, "perfect" in the appropriate Indian language, who would give "a minute attention to the customs and religious prejudices of the sepoys" because, "you need not be told how dangerous a disaffection in our native troops would be to our existence in this country . . .".<sup>28</sup> The Company view was that tranquillity could best be achieved by 'respecting' Indian religious traditions and customs. This view, coupled with the Company's licensing rights, was to prove a great stumbling block to the attempts of evangelicals to set up missionary stations in India in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

d. The Beginnings of Hostility: Changes in Britain

The evangelical 'missionary movement', which was to take off with the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1793, did not only experience difficulties because of Company fears for the tranquillity of India. The rapid growth of evangelicalism in the second half of the eighteenth century, at the same time as providing the impetus for an awakening of missionary zeal, contributed to open and sometimes bitter hostility from members of the Established Church, who feared for the continuance of its dominance. This had a profound impact on the attitude of many members of the Establishment towards the evangelical missionary schemes that were put forward from the 1780s. An understanding of the religious tensions that existed in Britain at this time is as necessary as an understanding of the situation in India in order to comprehend the political manoeuvring that took place over the question of missions to India.

Many people in both the Established Church and 'Old Dissent' [Quakers, Presbyterians, Unitarians and most General Baptists] felt distaste towards the activities of evangelicals generally. Evangelicals were pejoratively referred to as 'enthusiasts', an ironic misapplication of the Greek word 'entheos' meaning 'the God within'. This was partly a reaction to the Puritan excesses of the

seventeenth century. Although by the mid-eighteenth century Old Dissent had become almost 'respectable', the evangelicalism of Methodism and New Dissent [Congregational, Particular Baptist and New Connexion General Baptist], with its extempore preaching, appeals to the heart, use of poorly-educated laymen and lack of respect for parish boundaries, reminded many people of the fanaticism of the previous century. The feeling of distaste was compounded when the lower social status of the new evangelical leaders was observed. It was felt to be dangerous for such men to be leading their fellows and believed to be against the natural order of God.

For many Churchmen, the reaction went much further than distaste because the rapid increase of Methodism and New Dissent from the 1770s was seen as a very real threat to the position of the Church of England as the national church. This was compounded by Dissenters' renewed attempts to have the Test and Corporation Acts repealed and the strongly-voiced opposition of many Dissenters to the principle of a state church.<sup>29</sup> High Churchmen regarded an attack on the Church as an attack on the state. Schism to them was therefore both a sin and a crime. Most opprobrium was reserved for the Methodists because of their 'enthusiastic' ways and disregard for Church order. Those Churchmen who were not prepared to go as far as Methodism, but who nevertheless were evangelical in outlook, also came

under attack. These men were regarded by many as the Church of England's Trojan Horse, sabotaging its position from within and in the process undermining the very foundations of the state.

The religious climate from the 1770s to beyond the turn of the century was one of great ferment. For a variety of reasons Dissenters were regarded with suspicion and dislike at this time and by the 1790s had replaced the Catholics as the scapegoat of 'the mob' in Church and King riots. It was not a good time to be proposing evangelical missionary schemes. Prejudices that evangelical activity was fanatical and subversive of the established order would naturally have implications for Indian officials, responsible for preserving the security of the Company's possessions.

e. A Missionary Proposal for Bengal

Although too much should not be made of this prior to the 1790s, the association in the minds of men of influence of evangelicalism and fanaticism did much to hinder evangelical missionary schemes. The fate of Charles Grant's 'Proposal to Establish a Protestant Mission in Bengal and Bahar' illustrates this. This proposal is particularly significant because it came from members of the Established Church who were also Company servants.

Thomas Coke had sent a copy of his 1783 proposal to Grant, soliciting support and in 1786 Grant and his friends put forward their own scheme for government-sponsored missionary activity in India.<sup>30</sup> Grant, in a letter to John Thomas, an ex-East India ship's surgeon, explained why he felt that government support was necessary, echoing the Rev Mr Stevenson's remarks of 1716.<sup>31</sup> Grant maintained that

. . . in case of converting any of the Natives, as soon as they renounce Hindooism, they must suffer a dreadful excommunication in civil life, unless they are under the immediate protection of the English. The converts may suffer persecution and death, living in heathen towns under heathen landlords. They are entirely in the power of the enemy . . . . Therefore, in the proposal for a mission, the protection of the English Government was insisted on as material . . . .

In Grant's opinion, the Company had done far too little to encourage the growth of Christianity in India. The support of the national government, he believed, would put pressure on the Company administration in India to encourage and protect missionaries and converts at the same time as increasing their respectability in the eyes of Indians. Moreover, Grant's vision for extensive missionary work in India required public funding. In order that converts should escape persecution, Grant suggested that the scheme begin with the establishment of a Christian community at Gumalti in northern Bengal on the "free property of a European Christian".<sup>32</sup>

The methods and arguments employed by Grant and the Evangelical Company chaplains who helped him with this proposal, set the pattern for all those that followed and therefore they will be examined in some detail. Although the idea was Grant's, he was helped by the Rev David Brown, a Company Chaplain and Superintendant of the Calcutta Orphan Asylum, and William Chambers, an interpreter at the Supreme Court.

Taking to heart the biblical injunction to use the wisdom of the serpent and the innocence of the dove [Matt X.16], the proposal was written to be "adapted to a particular class of Lord Cornwallis's description" and "accommodated to the temper of the Europeans here".<sup>33</sup> This acknowledged that the good opinion of influential Europeans in India would smooth the path. The support of the governor-general was considered to be vital because, in Bengal,

the governor . . . is like the head to the body, in a more clear and intimate manner than, perhaps, is known in any other country: whatever is undertaken without his permission, or some sort of protection, must wither and die. Those who live in England, remote from the springs of government, will be hardly able to comprehend this. To us it is very clear.<sup>34</sup>

In order to appeal to Lord Cornwallis, Brown and his friends "thought it needful in prudence at first to approach [him] by very gentle gradations." They therefore pressed the idea of native schools "as preparatory to the

main business of giving Christian light to this land sitting in heathen darkness".<sup>35</sup>

These quotations reveal the impact of the new system of government for British India. In the 1773 Regulating Act a governor-general had been appointed for the first time. Government control was extended still further by Pitt's 1784 Act with the creation of a superintending Board of Control appointed by Government. However, Henry Dundas, the first president of the Board of Control, insisted that India should be governed in India and not in Whitehall or Leadenhall Street. He believed that the function of the Board should be one of general supervision and tried to confine himself to ensuring that the right men were appointed and smoothing over any difficulties that arose. Dundas' policy allowed the governor-general great power. This was reinforced when the men appointed were, like Cornwallis, members of the British aristocracy with much personal influence both at home and in India. Lord Cornwallis demonstrated this power when, prior to taking up his post in 1786, he insisted on the principle that the governor-general should be able to override his council in special cases and also be able to combine the post with that of commander-in-chief if he considered it necessary.

The arguments in favour of the missionary scheme were underpinned by two assumptions. The first, which was

rarely questioned, was that Providence had given India to Great Britain in order to further the progress of Christianity. Behind this lay the implicit threat that if Britain did not perform her Christian duty, Divine vengeance would be wreaked upon her. The second, and this ~~was~~ questioned, was that the condition of the Indians had become extremely degraded under their own religions. Much time and energy was spent by the leaders of the missionary movement in an attempt to prove this second point. Grant's principal argument therefore was that the condition of the Hindu was so depraved that a reformation of his morals through the teaching of the principles of Christianity was the only way to reconcile him to foreign dominion and make him a useful citizen of the British empire. This was an argument that could be expected to strike a chord with 'those who counted', because it paralleled the argument in England for the necessity of a reformation of manners and the abandonment of vice, if Englishmen were to be made sober and loyal citizens. In direct contradiction to the opinion of those who opposed missionary activity in India, Grant argued that there was

more danger of losing the country from leaving the dispositions and prejudices of the people in their present state, than from any change that the light of Christianity and an improved state of civil society would produce in them.<sup>26</sup>

Grant capped his arguments by maintaining that the security of the Company's rule in India could only be maintained by



giving rulers and ruled a common religion to bind them together.

Fourteen copies of the Proposal, with appropriate covering letters, were sent to the men Grant and his friends believed would best be able to promote it. The strategy was to mount an assault on three different groups. Firstly, they knew that they had to obtain the support of the episcopacy if the plan was to gain respectability, Churchmen were to come forward and, if necessary, the missionaries were to be ordained. Secondly, they hoped to interest William Wilberforce in the cause, knowing that he was highly regarded by both clergy and influential laymen. Thomas Raikes, the wealthy Russia merchant, used his connections to solicit support from the Bishop of London amongst others. These first two assaults on men 'in high stations' were aimed ultimately at gaining the patronage of the British government and the governor-general in India.

The third prong of the attack was on the Evangelical clergy. Grant and his friends knew that they were unlikely to persuade any other Churchmen to come forward and naturally hoped that the proposed missionaries would come from their own ranks. Charles Simeon at Cambridge was to be their instrument here. Apart from Simeon, there was very little success in arousing interest in the scheme. The Archbishop of Canterbury did not respond. Bishop

Porteus of London, while sympathetic, did not want the Indian venture to jeopardise his own scheme for the conversion of the 'negroes' and asked that Grant's proposals should not be made public. The SPCK would have liked to help but did not have the resources. Wilberforce was in very poor health at the time and could not assist. Pitt would do nothing for them. No Churchmen, Evangelical or otherwise, came forward to volunteer as missionaries.<sup>37</sup>

Lord Cornwallis' reply to Grant foreshadowed all future government pronouncements on the subject: as governor-general he could not actively support such a scheme, but he would not oppose it either.<sup>38</sup> He told David Brown that he had "no faith in such schemes", thinking they "must prove ineffectual."<sup>39</sup> Cornwallis held fast to the Whig principle that power was essentially corrupting and that government, therefore, should be minimal, restricted to ensuring the security of life and property. From principle, and because of the pragmatic difficulties of governing such a vast territory, he wanted imperial rule to cause as little upheaval as possible in India by limiting its impact on the population. This was the guiding principle behind his Permanent Settlement of 1793 which, extended to Britain's policy towards Indian religions, meant that Indians should be left free to worship as they wished. Bearing in mind, Cornwallis' views on the care to be taken over the customs and religious prejudices of the Indians, together with his

aristocratic and 'whiggish' distaste for 'enthusiasm', Grant and his friends did well to avoid outright opposition to their scheme. This was no doubt due in part to the high regard in which Grant was held by Lord Cornwallis.

Grant's friend, Thomas Raikes, probably put his finger on the reason why the scheme did not go further when he warned Grant that it was likely to be impeded because, "on this side the promoters and agents in the scheme are of those who are called or supposed to be Methodists." Raikes went on to say that "though they may be . . . men of great piety and strictest manners; [the bishops] never like to give the reins into the hands of men of warm imaginations."<sup>40</sup>

Having failed to stimulate interest in the scheme, Grant decided to finance a mission himself.<sup>41</sup> This also failed. The problem was not, however, hostility from Government or the Company but the unsuitability of the man he had chosen to run his mission. John Thomas, a Baptist, insisted on propagating his views against infant baptism, to the alarm of members of the Established Church. It should be noted from all this that at no stage was Grant's missionary scheme forbidden by either Cornwallis, the Court of Directors, the Government or the episcopacy. The greatest problem at this point appeared to be apathy. However, the seeds of resistance were there. The new scheme was not originated by an official body of the Established Church.

Its proposers were Evangelicals, whose strict loyalty to the Church could be questioned and whose 'enthusiasm' for the propagation of Christianity could be regarded as subversive of the status quo. This lack of support for a missionary scheme put forward by members of the Established Church and respected servants of the Company, was a forerunner of troubles to come and events took on a worse complexion in the aftermath of the French Revolution.

### Notes to Chapter 1

1. For the sake of brevity, evangelicals within the Church of England will be referred to either as 'Evangelicals' or 'Church Evangelicals'. Similarly, the word 'Church' on its own refers to the Church of England.

2. quoted in J Owen, History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 3 vols, London, 1816-20, II, 310.

3. New Dissent: Congregationalists, Particular Baptists and New Connexion General Baptists. This followed a pattern of growth similar to that of Methodism.

4. See A D Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England, London, 1976; G R Balleine, A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England, London, 1909 reissue; G F A Best, 'The Evangelicals and the Established Church in the Early Nineteenth Century', Journal of Theological Studies, X, 1959; F W B Bullock, Evangelical Conversion in Great Britain 1696-1845, St Leonards, 1959; L E Elliot-Binns, The Early Evangelicals: A Religious and Social Study, London, 1953; C Smyth, 'The Evangelical Movement in Perspective', Cambridge Historical Journal, VII, 1943; H Willmer, Evangelicals 1785-1835, Cambridge University Hulsean Prize Essay No 134, 1963; J D Walsh, 'Origins of Evangelical Revival', Essays in Modern Church History in Memory of Norman Sykes, ed G V Bennett and J D Walsh, London, 1966 and A S Wood, The Inextinguishable Blaze, London, 1960.

5. For a discussion of missionary motivation see, J van den Berg, Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Enquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period 1698-1815, Kampen 1956 and F S Piggin, Making Evangelical Missionaries, Sutton Courtenay, 1984.

6. H Prideaux, 'An Account of the English Settlements in the East Indies, together with some Proposals for the Propagation of Christianity in those parts of the World' dated 23 Jan 1694-5, contained in The Life of the Reverend Humphrey Prideaux, London, 1748, 161-183.

7. See extract of General letter to Bengal, 2 Feb 1713, para 95, IOR Home Misc 59.

8. For general histories of Christian missions in India, the most up-to-date and perceptive is S Neill's, A History of Christianity in India, 2 vols, Cambridge, 1984-5. See also J W Kaye, Christianity in India: An Historical Narrative, London, 1859; J Richter, A History of Protestant Missions in India, translated by S H Moore, Edinburgh and London, 1908; K S Latourette, A History of the Expansion of

Christianity, 6 vols, London, 1941-5, and J Hough, History of Christianity in India, 5 vols, London, 1845-60.

9. E R Hull, Bombay Mission History, 2 vols, Bombay, 1927, I, 20.

10. Extract of MPC, 30 Oct 1787 in IOR Home Misc 59, 35-43. Campbell estimated that there were about 100,000 Roman Catholics on the coast and 17,000 within the walls of Madras.

11. Hull, Bombay Mission History, I, 27.

12. Court to Madras, 25 January 1716, para 82, IOR E/3/113. See Hull, Bombay Mission History, 31 for an example of the oath administered.

13. Court to Madras, 7 Feb 1744, para 42, IOR E/3/109.

14. E A Lehmann, It Began at Tranquebar, translated by M J Lutz, Madras, 1956, 68.

15. quoted in Neill, Christianity in India, II, 39.

16. Lehmann, It Began at Tranquebar, 43.

17. The English link with the Danish mission was through Queen Anne's Danish consort and his chaplain, Böhme. Subsequently, George I was also strongly sympathetic to missionary activity

18. F Penny, The Church in Madras, 3 vols, London, 1904-22, I, 184. The SPCK did not officially take on Royal Danish missionaries as agents until 1728.

19. quoted in An Abstract of the Annual Reports and Correspondence of the SPCK from the Commencement of its Connexion with the East India Missions, A.D. 1709, to the Present Day, London, 1814, 22.

20. Quoted in Penny, I, 185-6.

21. Court to Madras, 14 Feb 1728, para 93, IOR E/3/104.

22. Court to Madras, 20 Mar 1744, para 6, IOR E/3/109.

23. Cited in J C Marshman, The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward, 2 vols, London, 1859, I, 39.

24. Neill, Christianity in India, II, 108.

25. SPCK petition dated 3 Dec 1771, contained in Abstract of Annual Reports, 120-123.



26. H Morris, The Life of Charles Grant, London. 1904, 98 and 108-114 for Grant's letter to William Wilberforce giving details of the proposal.
27. Cornwallis to H Dundas, 4 April 1790, NLS MSS, 3385, 329.
28. *ibid*, 349.
29. Attempts for repeal were made in 1772, 1773, 1779, 1787 and 1789. See R G Cowherd, The Politics of English Dissent, New York, 1956; U Henriques, Religious Toleration in England 1787-1833, London, 1961 and W R Ward, Religion and Society in England 1790-1850, London, 1972.
30. Terms of the proposal sent to Wilberforce can be found in Morris, Life, 108-114. For detailed discussion of the tactics, see 92-127.
31. See above, 27.
32. Letter to Thomas, quoted in Morris, Life 105. See also 107 and 113.
33. Address to Charles Simeon from Brown, Chambers, Udny and Grant, Sep 1787, Ridley Hall MSS.
34. Memorial Sketches of the Rev David Brown . . ., ed Mrs D Brown, London, 1816, 243.
35. *ibid*, 248.
36. Morris, Life 112.
37. *ibid*, 106 for list and 106-122 for details.
38. *ibid*, 122.
39. Letter from David Brown to Charles Simeon, 24 Feb 1789, quoted in W M Carus ed, Life of Charles Simeon MA, second edition, London, 1847, 76.
40. Morris, Life, 115.
41. See Morris, Life, Chapter VII, 128-143 for discussion of this scheme.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE 1790s: A TIME OF CRISIS

#### a. The 1793 Renewal of the East India Company's Charter

In 1790 Charles Grant returned home from India. He had not forgotten his missionary scheme and almost immediately set about trying to obtain more support for it. William Wilberforce, however, warned him that the 'Proposal' would have to be remodelled if it was to have any hope of success. Wilberforce seems to have feared that Grant's extensive mission proposal was "too formidable at a time when Europe was in a state of fermentation." Once again we see the wisdom of the serpent in Wilberforce's advice to limit the proposal "to the diffusion of knowledge generally, leaving it to be inferred that Christianity would be included in the plan"<sup>1</sup>.

This tactic seems to have borne some fruit. The reworked paper was duly submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury [John Moore] and the Bishop of London [Beilby Porteus].

The new proposal, in Grant's words, concentrated on

the leading idea of introducing the knowledge of the English language among the natives . . . , in order thereby to open to them the door of European knowledge in general, and in particular to impart to them the Christian Revelation.<sup>2</sup>



The "superior light and science of the English" was praised and the belief expressed that Indians would be "well-disposed" to accept such free and superior instruction. The proposal appealed to humanitarian instincts by stressing the wretchedness of the people and pointed out that the diffusion of Christianity "might help give them an attachment to the government and detach them from neighbouring tyrannical governments." The authors also made use of Britain's rivalry with France and contrasted the energy of the French in making proselytes with the indifference of "we who have a purer faith."<sup>3</sup>

This time Moore appears to have been well-disposed and followed up Wilberforce's request that he should recommend the scheme to the King. According to Marshman, the King was sympathetic but hesitated to countenance Grant's scheme, "chiefly in consequence of the alarming progress of the French Revolution, and the proneness of the period to movements subversive of the established order of things." Marshman also maintains that Pitt and Dundas were "on the whole favourably disposed".<sup>4</sup> The only influential person to come out "decidedly against" the mission scheme was Lord Cornwallis, who did not make his views known to Grant until 1794.<sup>5</sup> It was fortunate for the missionary lobby that Cornwallis was replaced as governor-general by the Evangelical Sir John Shore, who later became Lord Teignmouth.

Wilberforce and Grant felt that signs were favourable enough to take the opportunity of the 1793 renewal of the East India Company's charter to press for a clause recognising the duty of promoting the religious and moral improvement of the people of India. What Wilberforce and Grant hoped to achieve was some form of ecclesiastical establishment for India, financed by the Company, whereby the Established Church would propagate the 'purest' form of Christianity to both the 'dissolute' Europeans and the 'depraved' Indians. After consultation with the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Wilberforce moved the following resolution:

That it is the peculiar and bounden duty of the Legislature to promote by all just and prudent means, the interests and happiness of the inhabitants of the British Dominions in India; and that, for these ends, such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge, and to their religious and moral improvement.<sup>6</sup>

This has become known as the 'pious clause'. It passed in the Committee of the House and in the House itself on 14 May 1793. The only objection at this point seems to have come from Philip Francis, who argued that, although the object was good and could not "with propriety" be opposed, his experience told him that the measure would be evaded and its only effect would be to create patronage and bring expense to the Company.<sup>7</sup> The clause passed without division as did a second clause, introduced three days later, empowering and requiring the Company to send out

"fit and proper persons" to act as "schoolmasters, missionaries, or otherwise".<sup>6</sup> It seems that this new clause was included on the advice of the Attorney General and Solicitor General, who were not happy with the wording of the preamble. They felt that it had to be made more specific to be legally effective.<sup>7</sup>

The passing of these clauses in the House of Commons, almost without comment, seems surprising in the light of the subsequent history of efforts to further missionary activity in India. It is very similar to the course of events in the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade, where a resolution recommending the abolition of the trade passed the Commons in 1792 but was defeated in the Lords after the 'West India interest' had marshalled its forces against it.

A special meeting of the Court of Proprietors was immediately convened in order to discuss this new clause and virtually every speech made opposed it. Lushington, the Company chairman, was strongly against this "very dangerous and expensive measure". Furthermore, he foretold the end of British rule in India if missionaries proved to be successful. Even in these early days there was concern about the political effect of missionary activity on a subject race. The arguments used were threefold. Firstly, the Hindu religion was described as immutable and therefore

there was no point in trying to convert Hindus. Secondly, it was argued that government-supported missionaries would endanger the security of India. Thirdly, the great expense of the measure was pointed out. This last consideration was argued the most vehemently, as might have been expected from a commercial company. Even the Evangelical director, Samuel Thornton, found it necessary to state that the missionaries were not to go out to make proselytes but "merely to instil the virtuous and moral principles of the religion of the Church of England into the minds of the natives."<sup>10</sup>

As a result of the Company's opposition, objections began to be voiced at the Third Reading of the Bill. Hussey objected because he "conceived that the tendency of all [my emphasis] religions was to make good subjects and virtuous men . . . ". In reply, Wilberforce lamented that Hussey "should have considered the Hindoo or Christian religion merely as an useful engine for the purposes of government, and that he should have deemed the Hindoo equally calculated to promote that end . . . ." In order to prove this point, Wilberforce went on to read letters from people which, by their description of the character of the Hindu and his religious tenets, seemed to prove the necessity of his conversion to Christianity.<sup>11</sup>

.

Henry Dundas in Parliament disagreed with these unfavourable assessments of the Hindu character and argued that, on the contrary, he thought the people of India were harmless and orderly. He went on to ask if the evils mentioned by Wilberforce were confined to the Hindus of India and pointed out that "the same imputation which was urged against them, as a plea for the establishment of Christianity, applied in a great measure to those nations by whom the benefits of that religion were already enjoyed; . . . ". In any case, Dundas argued, the "beneficial object" proposed by Wilberforce "could not be attained by the present measure".<sup>12</sup> This was somewhat of a volteface, for Dundas earlier had promised to support the clauses. Wanting the Bill to pass quickly, he was not prepared to go against the strong feeling of hostility from the Company and felt it more prudent to withdraw his support. Dundas had to think of the success of other parts of the Bill. Opposition was not limited to the Company. Charles James Fox considered that "all systems of proselytisation as wrong in themselves, and as productive, in most cases, of abuse and of political mischief". Missionary activity was one principle which would not attract Whig support and it provided a useful opportunity to attack the Government. Wilberforce, in the face of this opposition, consented to withdraw the clause. The Bill was then passed and sent to the Lords.<sup>13</sup>

The debate in the House of Lords took place on 3 and 5 June and the Bishop of London, faithful to his promise to Wilberforce, ensured that the religious clauses were taken up once again. Porteus "lamented the lack of an adequate ecclesiastical establishment in India for propagating the principles of Christianity" and observed that

where the principles of that religion were established in their primitive purity, the effect was beneficial both to individuals and to states: and he urged the necessity of such a measure in the present instance from the depravity and baseness of the general character of the Hindoos.<sup>14</sup>

However, he also saw "considerable difficulty in adopting a measure, . . . of propagating the Christian religion among the natives".<sup>15</sup> The Bishop of St Davids had

great doubts indeed, as to what had been mentioned in another place, of sending missionaries to convert to Christianity the natives of Indostan; - He conceived the religion of a country to be connected with the government, and he did not think that any foreign state had a right to interfere with the government of another country, without an express commission from Heaven.

He went on to argue that the commission to the Apostles had ceased with their deaths.<sup>16</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury's support was distinctly lukewarm. He was most concerned that his countrymen should enjoy the "comforts" of religion and "would not attempt to convert the natives to Christianity unless they were disposed to embrace it".<sup>17</sup> There was little disagreement that more chaplains should be provided for the main settlements but great reservations

were expressed about the desirability of a specific measure for the conversion of India. The prime concern of the prelates of England was the European population of India.

The views expressed in this debate by both supporters and opponents of missionary activity were those which were to be heard many times over the ensuing years. Central to both of them was their assessment of the Indian character. Charles Grant, in his "Observations on the State of Society in Asia" expressed what was to become the firm evangelical view. His opinions, when eventually published, held great weight because of his long service in India and the high offices which he had held in the Company. Grant had written this paper in 1792 to gain the support of Henry Dundas but it was not until 1797 that he presented it formally to the Court of Directors as a 'Paper of Business'. In it, he attempted to convince the reader of the degraded character of the Hindu by citing accounts from famous travellers and official records. This degradation, he argued, was caused by their religion and therefore could be changed through the inculcation of the superior principles of Christianity.<sup>18</sup>

The Evangelical propaganda was successful in persuading the Bishop of London to give his unequivocal support and, to a lesser extent, the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, it made little impact on others and irritated many 'old

India-hands'. The Warren Hastings Papers demonstrate that many Company officials had a much more sympathetic view of the Hindu than the evangelicals and they felt that the picture painted by the missionary movement was grossly unfair.<sup>19</sup> The Company was, of course, concerned not to incur any unnecessary expense and out of self-interest might have been keen to justify its attitude against the proselytisation of India by giving a more favourable opinion of Indians. Nevertheless, it seems that Hastings and his like-minded friends held their views as genuinely and fervently as did the evangelicals.

Grant and Wilberforce were somewhat unfair in accusing the Company of a refusal to help promote Christianity in India. They conveniently ignored the help that the Company had given in the past to both Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries, help that was to continue to be given unquestioningly to the SPCK and, to a lesser extent, to other missionaries. They also glossed over the small increase in the inadequate ecclesiastical establishment that had been agreed. Dundas made a fairer comment when, during the debates, he argued that the question as far as he could see was not whether the government "wished well to the establishment of Christianity in India", but whether such an object "could be best attained by the means he [Wilberforce] was anxious to suggest."<sup>20</sup> For a commercial company in dire financial straits, to have the discretion



to permit missionaries to enter India was one thing. To have to pay for their upkeep, a matter that in the past had always been considered the realm of voluntary contributions, was quite another.

b. The Impact of the French Revolution

i In Britain

It could be argued that the near passage of Wilberforce's religious clauses through the House of Commons in 1793 was a victory for the missionary movement. It demonstrated that there was wide acceptance of the principle that Britain had a responsibility to promote the religious and moral improvement of India. Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London had expressed sympathy for the cause and this was an important prerequisite for any action on the part of the secular establishment.

However, these small steps forward were halted in the years following the French Revolution. The overthrow of established authority in France and its chaotic and bloody aftermath gave a powerful weapon to those who were hostile to missionary activity carried out by Dissenters. The support some Dissenters had initially given the Revolution, their membership of radical societies and their subsequent opposition to the war with France, enabled Churchmen to raise the cry of 'Church and State in danger'. Their cause

was not helped by the attempt of the Dissenters in 1789 to have the Test and Corporation Acts repealed, during which they set up a nationwide network to demand their 'rights'. Instead of the hoped-for mass demonstration of public support for Dissenting claims, there was widespread and violent reaction against them. The Dissenting failure to rouse the public had a strong effect on Andrew Fuller, who was to become the first secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society. In 1807-8 and again in 1812-13, he was very nervous of making any threats to rouse the public as a means of forcing concessions out of government.<sup>21</sup>

The association of missionary activity in many minds with Methodism and Dissent damaged the cause. The democratic organisation of much of Dissent and Methodism and their appeal in areas of political radicalism seemed to prove that their churches were becoming, to quote John Walsh, "the unconscious tools of a popular democracy that sought to destroy the existing order in church and state".<sup>22</sup> As he points out, distrust of Methodism developed into a suspicion that on occasion bordered on hysteria. The very organisation of the missionary societies reinforced the feeling of distrust engendered by the developments just outlined. In 1799, the same year that the Government prohibited Corresponding Societies, a clergyman at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, made explicit the association of missionary activity with political

radicalism. He accused the members of missionary societies of meeting "under the pretext of spreading abroad Christianity among the heathen". In proof of this he pointed out how

they are affiliated, they have a common object, they correspond with each other, they look for assistance from foreign countries, in the very language of many of the seditious societies. Above all, it is to be marked, they have a common fund . . . . [which] . . . certainly will be, turned against the constitution.<sup>23</sup>

He could also have mentioned that they distributed cheap tracts and pamphlets, another radical activity. As late as 1810, the Rev T Sikes told Lord Teignmouth, ex-governor-general of India and by then president of the British and Foreign Bible Society (B&FBS), that Thomas Paine "might (for aught I can perceive) as easily have been admitted into your Lordship's Society as any of the bench of Bishops".<sup>24</sup> Many feared that the 'missionary' practice of preaching Christ's message of the equality of all men before God could only make the lower orders dissatisfied with their position in life.

It was but one step further to connect fanaticism at home with fanaticism abroad. Sidney Smith in his famous diatribe against the 'anabaptist' missionaries in India in the Edinburgh Review of April 1808, provides the most colourful example of this. He deprecated the fact that the task of conversion, which he admitted to be important, had devolved upon the lowest of persons because no one else

could be found to go out. These men, in Smith's opinion, were unlikely to carry out their task with discretion and would be dangerous. Such "madness", in his view was

disgusting and dangerous enough at home:- Why are we to send out little detachments of maniacs to spread over the fine regions of the world the most unjust and contemptible opinion of the gospel?<sup>25</sup>

He warned that:

. . . even for missionary purposes . . . the utmost discretion is necessary; and if we wish to teach the natives a better religion, we must take care to do it in a manner which will not inspire them with a passion for political change or we shall inevitably lose our disciples altogether . . . .<sup>26</sup>

The Bishop of Worcester, Samuel Butler, was of a similar opinion and in 1811 warned the government that, "unless [it] act cautiously, these methodistical proselytizers, by their absurd enthusiasm, will bring about the loss of India".<sup>27</sup>

#### ii The Haldane Mission Proposal

The connection in men's minds between missionary activity and political radicalism was borne out by the attitude of Henry Dundas and the Court of Directors to a 1796 proposal for an extensive mission to be set up in Benares. This was put forward by Robert Haldane, a wealthy Scottish landowner, David Bogue, an Independent minister, and William Innes and Greville Ewing, both Church of Scotland

ministers. These men were members of the recently-formed [London] Missionary Society but their scheme was a private one, to be funded by Haldane. Their proposal was the only missionary proposal to be refused outright by the Company and should be compared with the routine permission granted in 1797 to two German Lutherans to proceed to India for the SPCK.<sup>28</sup>

The plan was easy to refuse. Firstly, there were relatively large numbers involved: Haldane and his colleagues proposed to take out at least thirty people. Secondly, at least two of the proposers had known democratic leanings and had spoken of their dislike of religious establishments. Haldane and Bogue had welcomed the French Revolution, believing that it heralded the prospect of a better order of things. Haldane had also spoken out against the war with France and the raising of volunteers for it.<sup>29</sup> Bogue, in a 1791 sermon had presaged that "this generation shall not pass away before the expiring groans of arbitrary power are heard through every country in Europe."<sup>30</sup> Even William Wilberforce found them "all perfect democrats, believing that a new order of things is dawning". He was unable to persuade Dundas to support the scheme even after advising him that it would be better to get Haldane out of the way to the "back settlements to let off his pistol in vacuo" because "in Scotland such a man is sure to create a ferment".<sup>31</sup>

Opponents of missionary activity, like the Rev Dr William Porteous, a prolific correspondent with Henry Dundas who was then Home Secretary, took the opportunity to argue that "this missionary business was intended to excite, and to embody a certain description of the people, whose energy might afterwards be called out on business which is at present considered only by a few" and to warn that, although "they have not directly meddled with politics" they attack religious establishments and parish ministers and their pamphlets inculcate "an aversion to the present order of things."<sup>32</sup> The Duke of Atholl was of a similar opinion. He regarded Haldane as "the first link of a chain to cover more mischievous and dangerous designs" and referred to his teachers as "unlicensed missionaries" and, along with Porteous, was worried about Haldane's Sunday schools. The Duke saw that the "lowest of the people become teachers" and argued that such people instilled "the most pernicious doctrines, civil and religious". In addition he maintained that Haldane was seducing parishioners away from the Established Church.<sup>33</sup> In other words, missionary activity was regarded along with other evangelical activities such as Sunday schools, prayer meetings, itinerant preaching and distribution of cheap pamphlets, as a threat to the Establishment, both secular and ecclesiastical. The 1790s was therefore an inauspicious time for such activity, particularly in Scotland where radicalism was being repressed by force.

Dundas had already been burnt in effigy and there was great similarity in evangelical methods and those of the 'Friends of the People' in Scotland.

Just as many saw the dangers to the Established Church in Haldane's activities, so Haldane felt that he was being unreasonably excluded from India because he had become a Dissenter. He told Henry Dundas:

We think we have an equal right with the missionary, sent from the English Society for propagating the Gospel [the SPCK] . . . We think our claim is not inferior to theirs. If no bad effects have arisen from their efforts to propagate the Gospel, why should they be feared from ours?

Haldane's letter to Dundas and the Court of Directors were hardly calculated to allay such fears. He went on to tell Dundas that he was a "hippocrite" and warned him that

a refusal would be attended with disagreeable consequences, as there is hardly anything that would give the religious people of the island a worse opinion of the Government of Great Britain and of the existing administration, than being refused liberty to propagate the religion of Jesus Christ.

Although he assured Dundas that they wanted to do things quietly and not to agitate the public mind, he was nevertheless prepared to do so because he was confident the Government would not ignore "the sentiments and wishes of the most virtuous and respectable part of the community". As the coup de grace Haldane told Dundas to remember that "Death who knocked without distinction at

the palaces of the great as well as the cottages of the poor will ere long summon you to give an account of your stewardship."<sup>34</sup>

The threat of public involvement was their only card and Haldane and his friends made this even more explicit in another letter, telling Dundas that "the certain consequence of a refusal will be a contest with the friends of religion, who must feel that they are called on to exert themselves with persevering firmness, in order to attain their benevolent object." The letter then pointed out the many disadvantages Dundas and the Company would have to face from such a contest and expressed the opinion that there was no doubt as to the final issue as "the success of the friends of Christianity may be considered as absolutely certain".<sup>35</sup>

Haldane misjudged Dundas, the Court of Directors and the British public. Dundas and the Company do not appear to have been at all worried about public opinion on the matter except to the extent of being polite in their refusal of his request. Terpstra, in his thesis on the life of David Bogue, speaks of a tremendous response to their circular letter.<sup>36</sup> There is little evidence of this. In the India Office records there are six petitions with 61 signatures, signed mostly by clergymen: from the Missionary Society, Stirling, the Wesleyan Methodists, Coventry, Hampshire



and from certain ministers of the Church of Scotland.<sup>37</sup> The Court of Directors did not deign to reply to Haldane's last letter and, after a few months, the plan was dropped completely. Haldane's confidence in the 'religious public' was misplaced in 1797. However, he had roused some concern and the few petitions sent to the Company presaged events in 1813 when an enormous public petitioning movement was set in motion and rose up in favour of missions.

#### iii On Evangelicals

The effect of this decade of crisis was to put evangelicals of all shades on the defensive and make them anxious to establish their respectability. The Methodist leadership, in particular, took great pains to point out to political leaders how Methodism had helped to stem political unrest. The duty of submission was expressed with even more vehemence and regularity than it had been before. Wesley had long preached that it was "a plain command of the Bible that thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people" and he believed that it was never lawful for the people "under any provocation or pretext whatever to resist the sovereign" because "the hereditary succession to the throne is of divine institution, and therefore can never be interrupted, suspended or annulled by any pretext".<sup>38</sup>

A feature of evangelical writings and speeches during the 1790s and 1800s therefore was a concern to emphasise the role of Christianity as a stabilising force and the best way of maintaining order in society. Charles Grant, in his 'Observations' stated this explicitly when he wrote:

The present circumstances of Europe seem emphatically to point out, that nothing but such principles (of Christianity) can be depended upon for keeping our subjects in obedience and subordination.<sup>39</sup>

The necessity for Church Evangelicals to defend their position led to a definite cooling of relations with other evangelicals because they felt that they could only prove their loyalty to the Established Church by distancing themselves from association with Dissent and Methodism whenever possible. This phenomenon needs some discussion because comprehension of it is essential to understanding the tensions inherent in Church Evangelical cooperation with Methodists and Dissenters in the campaign to open India to Christianity. Geoffrey Best, in his article in the April 1959 Journal of Theological Studies, has contributed to a misunderstanding of the situation by maintaining the dubious nature of the Church evangelical's attachment to the Established Church, calling this attitude 'pious expediency'.<sup>40</sup> This is somewhat unfair and a truer statement of their position is set out in the following description by A S Wood.

The Evangelical is essentially a Churchman. His passionate attachment to the Revival did not dim his vision of the Established Church as the framework within which evangelism could be most effectively

prosecuted. He clung to the traditional standards of the Church, doctrinal, liturgical and homilitical . . . . he recognized that the parochial system was basic to the whole constitution of Anglicanism and that subordination to episcopal authority was the lynch-pin of the Church's discipline. He therefore disapproved of itinerant preaching.<sup>41</sup>

The corollary of all this was that he also wanted missionary activity to be carried out under the superintendence of the Church of England. This feeling directly led to the formation of the Church Missionary Society in 1799. Church Evangelicals experienced tension because they believed that the Established Church provided the purest form of Christianity, at the same time as feeling spiritually much closer to pious Dissenters. This tension coloured their responses to events and accounts for the seeming inconsistency of some of their actions.

Two letters from Grant to Fuller at the end of 1797, discussing his 'Observations', explain both the difficulties Grant felt in his relationship with Dissenters and how he felt their common end could best be achieved. He warned Fuller that "the cast of the work" was necessarily political, while stressing that its "aim and end is religious". Fuller did not see eye to eye with Grant on the language to be adopted in such a work and felt that certain principles should be much more strongly stated. Fuller was particularly unhappy with the proposal for an episcopal establishment in India and wanted no

restrictions whatever on missionary activity. This presaged the main tensions that would exist between Dissenters and Church Evangelicals in 1813. Grant pointed out in reply that the principle and the mode of acting upon it were two distinct things and reminded Fuller to bear in mind the circumstances under which Grant was obliged to act, particularly his situation as a director of the Company. He told Fuller that, as the Court of Directors held the key to the door of India and had a number of political and other prejudices against missionary activity, they either had to be persuaded or forced to use their key. Grant was against any force except that of the Legislature and as he felt the Legislature probably had the same prejudices as the Court of Directors, the time was not yet ripe for this. Nor was he in favour of arousing a "popular commotion" in such unsettled times. This, he believed, might well be used by the enemies of religion to harm the cause. Grant's aim, therefore, was to persuade the Court to acknowledge the general principle of sending the gospel to Britain's heathen subjects. Once this was established, the missionary lobby could build on firm ground.

On the same line of reasoning, Grant professed his belief that the narrowest limitations would be better than no admission at all for missionaries. He went on to confess that, although he wanted to see "godly dissenters" in India, he did not want this to be without qualification and

believed missionaries must be accountable for their behaviour. Grant expressed the fear that unscrupulous men would take the opportunity to go out under pretence of preaching the gospel and cause civil confusion and disorder which would "hazard our political existence". He concluded by telling Fuller that if he argued that Dissenters generally should be allowed to send missionaries to India, he would gain nothing but both ecclesiastical and political opposition. Thus we have, as early as 1797, the expectations of both Church Evangelicals and Dissenters clearly set out. They were not at one over aims and tactics and the same fears and hopes and discussions over tactics were to occur in 1813.<sup>42</sup>

Although the French Revolution and its aftermath harmed the missionary cause in the short-term, paradoxically, in the long-term it had the effect of greatly aiding the cause because it turned many men's minds to religion and its place in society. The 1798 Annual Register pointed to a new attention to religion which was emerging, especially among sizeable sections of the upper classes. It declared that:

The French revolution illustrated the connection between good morals and the order and peace of society more than all the eloquence of the pulpit and the disquisitions of moral philosophers had done for many centuries. The upper ranks in society, the generality of men of rank and fortune, not always the most inquisitive and penetrating on other subjects, were among the very first to take the alarm at those irreligious and profligate doctrines by which the

French democracy sought to shelter the profligacy of its conduct. In this country, royal proclamations were issued for paying a decent and due regard to Sundays. The established clergy were roused to a strenuous recommendation of the Christian doctrines, particularly a due observance of the external order, institutions, and usages, of the church of England. The churches were well attended, and sometimes even crowded. It was a wonder to the lower orders, throughout all parts of England, to see the avenues to the churches filled with carriages . . . .<sup>43</sup>

For many, the years of crisis were seen as a sign of God's displeasure at the infidelity of the nation and a warning that all men must be prepared for the final Judgement. A spate of millenarian interpretations ensued designed to show that the world was entering on its last days, France being seen as the Beast of the Revelation. Jacobinism was equated with atheism and an increasing number of people became concerned that, if Britain did not turn to 'vital Christianity', she would soon follow the path of France. William Wilberforce stated this bluntly in his Practical Christianity when he wrote:

Can there be a doubt, whither tends the path in which we are travelling, and whither at length it must conduct us? If any should hesitate, let them take a lesson from experience. In a neighbouring country, several of the same causes have been in action; and they have at length produced their full effect. Manners corrupted, morals depraved, dissipation predominant, above all, religion discredited, and infidelity grown into repute and fashion, have all terminated in the public disavowal of every religious principle which had been used to attract the veneration of mankind.<sup>44</sup>

The success of Wilberforce's pamphlet demonstrates that it found an answering chord in many people at the time and not

just in Great Britain. Within six months, 7,500 copies were sold and, by 1820, fifteen editions had appeared in Britain.<sup>45</sup> Wilberforce argued his case from two perspectives. Firstly, he started with the religious imperative: that man's actions must be based on Christian principles because at the end of the day he will "stand before the judgement seat of Christ." Wilberforce believed that attention to religion would draw the blessing of God upon the country and, highlighting the problems that 'infidel France' was experiencing, maintained that this would provide an "antidote for the malignity of the venom which is storing up in a neighbouring country". Secondly, he appealed to political interests: "the tendency of religion in general to promote the temporal well-being of political communities." He argued that if we did our Christian duty there would be peace at home because by

softening the glare of wealth, and moderating the insolence of power, she renders the inequalities of the social state less galling to the lower orders, whom also she instructs, in their turn, to be diligent, humble, patient, reminding them that their more lowly path has been allotted to them by the hand of God.

Wilberforce concluded his pamphlet by expressing the hope that, "if the mercy of God should so ordain it, the means of religious instruction and consolation might be again extended to surrounding countries and to the world at large."<sup>46</sup>

Thomas Haweis, one of the Anglican founders of the Missionary Society, carried the argument a stage further in his attempt to get the support of Sir Joseph Banks, the explorer and statesman. In 1798 he ventured to suggest

that nothing hath ever happened in this land which had a happier tendency to divert the minds of men from the dangerous field of political contention to the peaceable objects of general philanthropy than the Missionary Society. The most attached friend to Government could never have wished for effects more conducive to peace and union than have been produced, and it is obvious that our efforts, if ultimately successful, must be of the most beneficial consequences to the Kingdom at large.<sup>47</sup>

Just as Wilberforce and Haweis had argued that if men performed their Christian duty, there would be peace at home, Charles Grant, in the covering letter to his 'Observations' sent to the Directors of the East India Company in 1797, maintained that the propagation of Christianity in India would bring peace there. He made explicit

the duty of the Company, as part of a Christian community, its peculiar superadded obligations, its enlarged means, and its continual dependence upon the divine favour, . . . to honour God, by diffusing the knowledge of that revelation which he has vouchsafed to mankind.<sup>48</sup>

Grant, like Wilberforce, stressed that, in return, Christianity would provide a "healing principle" between governors and governed. Mindful of the fears that 'Methodism' incited political radicalism, Grant took care to make the point that "the establishment of Christianity in a country does not necessarily bring after it a free



political constitution." Instead he stressed that the promotion of Christianity in India would provide an "identity of sentiments and principles" between rulers and ruled that would be a "common bond".<sup>49</sup>

Here he was echoing the SPCK petition of 1771.<sup>50</sup>

Missionary rhetoric from this time made the point again and again. Evangelicals believed it was vital to the cause to convince the governors of India that the growth of Christianity there was the only way to cement relationships between rulers and ruled in a land which was too vast to be held by force.

#### . iv In India

So far, the French Revolution has been discussed in terms of its impact on attitudes towards evangelicalism and missionary activity in Britain. Similar attitudes were naturally to be found in India. The men who went there to operate the Company's Indian administration reflected the attitudes of the Establishment in Britain. As in England, a French invasion of India was also feared and the loyalty of any who were thought to espouse democratic principles came under question. Sir Stephen Lushington, chairman of the Company in 1796, told Claudius Buchanan that "French principles were sapping the foundations of Christianity and of social order".<sup>51</sup> From time to time democratic leanings

were suspected in the Dissenting missionaries who resided in India without licences from 1793. The following paragraphs will discuss this aspect while a full examination of the way in which the Dissenting missionaries were treated by the authorities in India will take place in subsequent chapters.

Several Baptist missionaries had been working in Bengal since 1793 and in 1798 Nathaniel Forsyth from the Missionary Society arrived in Bengal. The first signs of hostility from the Bengal government appeared in 1799 when, Claudius Buchanan, a Company chaplain, was asked by the authorities the following questions concerning the Baptists: "What was their object? How supported? Whether they were not of Republican principles?" These questions were asked by the new governor-general, Lord Mornington [Marquess Wellesley from 1799], who had recently arrived in Bengal and did not know the Baptists. According to Buchanan, the query was the outcome of Lord Mornington's determination "to send home all Frenchmen and Republicans."<sup>52</sup> Mornington felt the numbers of French established at Calcutta and in the provinces were becoming "a most alarming evil" and he instructed Sir Alured Clarke immediately to "institute a most active enquiry into the state of their numbers and conduct" and to send back to Europe "without hesitation, every man who cannot give you

a satisfactory account of his principles and connections".<sup>53</sup>

Buchanan was able to allay Mornington's suspicions as far as the Baptists were concerned by concentrating on Carey's character and usefulness. Little did Mornington realise that his fears had some basis. Initially William Carey, who is generally regarded as the leader of the Baptist missionaries, had heralded the French Revolution as the beginning of a new era of liberty. John Fountain, another Baptist, who had arrived in India in 1796, caused Andrew Fuller, the Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society [BMS], his greatest headaches. Fountain had been embroiled in politics in Oakham and Fuller had to beseech him, "Whatever you think about the downfall of despotism, . . . say little or nothing upon it."<sup>54</sup> It appears that Carey did not altogether give up his former views because in 1800, Fuller had to reproach him with talking "in the same way" with Fountain.<sup>55</sup> William Ward, the second member of the 'Serampore Trio', had an even more radical background. He had earlier been a printer and editor of the Hull Advertiser. On one occasion he had admitted Thelwall into a Baptist meeting to deliver a set of political lectures.<sup>56</sup>

Carey himself well realised the dangers of becoming embroiled in politics and as early as 1796 told Fuller to

be very careful that the missionaries be charged to say nothing about politicks on their first arrival, during their stay in Calcutta, and for the first three months is all danger; afterwards political fire will go out for want of fuel.<sup>57</sup>

Fountain, one of the Baptist missionaries, did not follow this advice and Fuller was sure that his indiscreet language was at the root of the Baptists' troubles. Fuller informed John Sutcliff, another Baptist leader, that "I have but little doubt of all their difficulties owing to [Fountain]".<sup>58</sup> Fuller was reinforced in his conviction that missionaries must keep out of politics if their presence was to be acceptable to the British authorities.

One of Fuller's letters to Carey deserves to be quoted extensively because it reveals what seems to have been the opinion of most of the evangelical missionary society leaders. Much time was spent by them urging their missionaries to curb their tongues and to stay out of politics with arguments similar to those discussed earlier. Such arguments were, of course, expedient. The gospel could not be spread at all if the missionaries were thrown out of India. However, the following letter from Andrew Fuller demonstrates that non-involvement in politics was a deeply-held conviction. Fuller told Carey that he was

not an old man, but I have lived long enough to perceive that 9 out of 10 who are clamorous for liberty only wish for a share in the power; follow them into private life and you will find them tyrants . . . . I have observed also that those ministers who have been the most violent partizans for democratic liberty,

are commonly not only cold-hearted in religion, but the most imperious in their own churches . . . .<sup>59</sup>

The Baptist indiscretions led to few setbacks. For this, the Baptists largely had the Evangelical chaplains, David Brown and Claudius Buchanan, to thank. Brown and Buchanan were highly regarded by Lord Wellesley and were able to assure him that the Baptists were loyal subjects of some respectability. However, four newly-arrived Baptist missionaries with their families did not fare so well. This setback seems to have been due to an unfortunate coincidence of circumstances. Firstly, the party of twelve was the largest missionary party yet to enter India. Secondly Lord Mornington, the new governor-general, was demonstrating his determination to deal severely with any evidences of insubordination or Jacobinism within the European community in India. Thirdly, a stiffly-worded instruction from the Court of Directors "not to permit any British subject, upon any pretence whatever to live under the Company's protection without being specially appointed or licensed by the Court of Directors or their respective Governments in India" had just been received by the Bengal government.<sup>60</sup> Finally, the Dissenting character and low social status of the missionaries would have given rise to suspicions of their loyalty and purpose.

Given all this, it is not surprising that the new missionaries arriving without licences were told they would be arrested if they set foot on British-controlled territory. Missionary rhetoric gives the impression that the East India Company had a positive policy against missionary activity in India. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the 1799 'Advertisement' against unlicensed persons was directed primarily at missionaries or even that it had missionaries in mind. The Court of Directors and the Board of Control were consistent in their opinion that unlicensed persons should not be permitted to go to India. There are numerous despatches emphasising the restrictions and ordering governors to send home immediately all unlicensed persons arriving in India. Henry Dundas felt particularly strongly about unlicensed entry into India. In 1787 he had told Sir Archibald Campbell that "I shall continue to exert myself to prevent every person who shall attempt to get out irregularly to India."<sup>61</sup>

In the face of this new hostility, the Baptists decided to settle in the Danish colony of Serampore where the governor was friendly to them. This, however, did not help Wellesley's good opinion of them. He regarded Serampore's "vicinity to the seat of Government in Bengal" as "peculiarly obnoxious" from the fact that "adventurers of every nation, jacobins of every description, swarm at

Serampoor, and it is the asylum of all our public defaulters and debtors".<sup>62</sup> Buchanan told Carey that Wellesley was unhappy about the presence of the Baptist press at Serampore, outside his control, wondering if it had been set up by some "wild democrat." Wellesley also had worries about the distribution of the Bible without commentary and asked Brown if it were safe, "seeing it [the Bible] taught the doctrine of Xn equality which the ignorance of the people might construe to political equality".<sup>63</sup> Brown was able to put Wellesley's mind at rest. In addition, he pointed out the usefulness of the press for Wellesley's new college for Oriental literature and helped secure the appointment of Carey as a teacher of Bengali there. As a result the Baptists' difficulties proved to be temporary and they were soon able to operate in British territory without restriction. By July 1800, Fuller was telling Saffery, another Baptist leader that:

We do not apprehend the British government at Calcutta to be hostile, but the present time makes them jealous lest under the character of missionaries men shd go for political ends. I hope if they know them, and see they have no bad ends in view, they will be friendly after all.<sup>64</sup>

The sole LMS missionary in India until 1804, Nathaniel Forsyth, similarly told his directors that he could go anywhere, "notwithstanding my political principles and of which [you] are so much afraid!" He added that "though I never asked leave to come . . . nor flattered any despot

for that purpose . . . I have never met with the smallest opposition."<sup>65</sup>

The next occasion on which missionaries were accused of Jacobinism occurred in 1806 in the aftermath of the Vellore Mutiny. In this mutiny nearly 200 Europeans were killed and wounded by some sepoys. William Elphinstone, chairman of the Company at the time, in a Minute on missionaries, made much of the likelihood of their intriguing with the French to overthrow British dominion in India.<sup>66</sup> It is to be doubted whether anyone seriously believed that the Protestant missionaries were intriguing with the French. Nevertheless, there seem to have been genuine fears that the French were scheming to undermine British rule in India. Lord William Bentinck told his father that "the predilection of the natives for the French is well known - they live upon terms of the greatest familiarity with the Indians."<sup>67</sup> Fears became even greater after Napoleon's invasion of Egypt. Both Robert Dundas and Edward Parry wrote to Lord Minto expressing their concern about France and Russia and their conviction that "the overthrow of the British power in India was a constant object of Bonaparte's hostile ambitions".<sup>68</sup> Such fears were played on by opponents of missionary activity, particularly after the 1806 Vellore Mutiny which will be discussed in the next chapter.<sup>69</sup>



There is no mention in the records of any other democratic associations on the part of the missionaries until 1810, when Fuller tells Ward about "Poor Robinson . . . His democratic notions of I know not what liberty and equality, are utterly unsuitable for a Christian missionary . . .".<sup>70</sup> In 1814, we find Fuller entreating John Chamberlain, another Baptist missionary in Bengal, who had drawn the severe censure of the Company on his head, to "watch your spirit and words. It was but yesterday that I heard a letter read, in which you was said to be a 'hot-headed democrat, not to be governed' . . .".<sup>71</sup>

The French Revolution, therefore had both long-term and short-term implications for the progress of missionary activity in India. In the short-term, it aroused general suspicion and contributed to a widening of the gulf between Church and Dissent. It compounded fears that the Established Church was losing its position and influence in society. Its effect on Church Evangelicals was to make them very wary of cooperation with like-minded Dissenters and contributed towards the founding of their own missionary society. In the long-term, however, the Revolution brought about a renewed regard for Christianity's utility in establishing the peace and order of society that helped break down the barriers against missionary activity in India.

A distinction should be made between the impact of the Revolution on attitudes towards missionary activity at home and in India. In Britain, both the Court of Directors and the Board of Control were naturally more cautious in allowing free rein to missionary activity than officials on the spot faced with a few individuals whose characters quickly became known to them and who were useful.

Republicanism was a useful accusation for opponents of missions to make and, from time to time, this caused minor difficulties. However, the officials on the spot were prepared to make their own judgements on the individuals concerned. The missionary society policy of stressing their non-involvement in politics, coupled with the utility of the missionaries and their generally good conduct, paid dividends.

Notes to Chapter II

1. J C Marshman, The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward, 2 vols, London, 1859, I, 35.
2. Grant to Moore, 7 March 1791, Lambeth Palace MSS, Moore Papers, I, 193.
3. The Proposal itself is contained in *ibid*, 195-8.
4. Marshman, Life, I, 36.
5. Letter from Grant to his wife. 4 Jan 1794, quoted in Morris, Life, 189. Cornwallis was also against the plans for Sierra Leone.
6. Journals of the House of Commons (CJ), 14 May 1793, XLVIII, 778.
7. The Senator or Clarendon's Parliamentary Chronicle (First Series), 13 May 1793, VII, 810.
8. R I & S Wilberforce, The Life of William Wilberforce, 5 vols, London, 1838, II, 392-3 (appx).
9. Marshman, Life, I, 37.
10. The Diary; or Woodfall's Register, 24 May 1793. The Sun's report of 5 June mentions the cost of the existing ecclesiastical establishment as £13,000.
11. The Senator, 24 May 1793, VII, 858
12. *ibid*, 24 May 1793, VII, 858/9.
13. The Parliamentary Register, 24 May 1793, XXXV, 584.
14. The Diary; or Woodfall's Register, 3 June 1793.
15. The Senator, 3 June 1793, VII, 890.
16. *ibid*, 5 June, VII, 897.
17. *ibid*, VII, 896/7 and The Gazeteer and Daily and Advertiser, 6 June 1793. I am grateful to Professor Marshall for the latter reference.
18. C Grant, 'Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals, and on the means of Improving It. Written chiefly in the Year 1792'. It was first published in 1813 as part of PP (East Indies), 1812-13, X, 31-146.

19. See for instance, Hastings' thoughts written in a draft paper contained in BL Add MSS 29233, 14-15.
20. The Senator, 24 May 1793, VII, 858-9.
21. See U Henriques, Religious Toleration in England 1787-1833, London, 1961, 54-98 and Fuller to Ward, 9 July 1807, BMS MSS, H1/1.
22. J D Walsh, 'The Yorkshire Evangelicals in the Eighteenth Century with Special Reference to Methodism', unpublished Cambridge PhD, 1956, 327.
23. Extract of the Proceedings and Debate in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 27 May 1796 held in EUL, Laing MSS II.500.
24. T Sikes, A Second Letter to Lord Teignmouth, London, 1810, 45.
25. Edinburgh Review, April 1808, XII, 179.
26. *ibid*, 171.
27. Quoted in J Van den Berg, Constrained by Jesus' Love . . . , Kampen, 1956, 145.
28. Public letter to Bengal, 30 June 1797, para 14, granting licences to Ringeltaube to proceed to Bengal and Holzberg to proceed to Madras, IOR, E/4/646.
29. W M Kirkland, 'The Impact of the French Revolution on Scottish Religious Life and Thought with Special Reference to Thomas Chalmers, Robert Haldane and Neil Douglas', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 1951, 92-96.
30. Letter from Porteous to Dundas, 20 Feb 1797, EUL, Laing MSS II.500.
31. R I & S Wilberforce, Life, II, 176-7.
32. Letters from Porteous to Dundas, 20 and 21 Feb 1797, EUL, Laing MSS II.500.
33. Letter from Duke of Atholl to Duke of Portland, 20 May 1799, EUL, Laing MSS II.500.
34. Haldane to Lord Advocate, 28 Sep 1796, EUL, Laing MSS II.500.
35. J J Matheson, A Memoir of Greville Ewing . . . . London, 1843, 631-633.

36. C Terpstra, 'David Bogue DD, 1750-1825, Pioneer and Missionary Educator, unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 1959, 263
37. Misc Letters Recd, IOR E/1/95, ff 289-289b and IOR E/1/96, 2-2e, 4-4e, 27-27a.
38. J Wesley, 'How Far is it the Duty of a Christian Minister to Preach Politics, 1782', The Works of the Rev J Wesley DD, London, 1872, , 14 vols, XI, 154-155. See also B Semmel, The Methodist Revolution, London, 1974; E P Stigant, 'Methodism and the Working Class 1760-1821, unpublished MA thesis, Keele, 1968; F S Piggin, 'Halévy Revisited: The Origins of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: An Examination of Semmel's Thesis', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, IX (1980).
39. 'Observations', contained in PP (East Indies), 1812-13, X, 136.
40. G Best, 'The Evangelicals and the Established Church in the Early Nineteenth Century', Journal of Theological Studies, X (1959).
41. A S Wood, 'The Life and Work of Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 1961, xlvii.
42. Grant to Fuller, 8 Nov 1797 and 4 Dec 1797, BMS MSS, H2/bound volume 3.
43. Annual Register (1798), XL, 229.
44. A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in this Country Contrasted with Real Christianity, London, 1797, 388.
45. F W B Bullock, Evangelical Conversion in Great Britain 1696-1845, St Leonards, 1959, 167. Practical Christianity was also translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish and Dutch. Twenty-five editions had been published in America by 1826.
46. Practical Christianity, 4, 419, 364, 405, 491.
47. Quoted in A S Wood, 'Life of Haweis', 257.
48. Covering letter by Grant dtd 16 Aug 1797, found in PP (East Indies), 1812-13, X, 32.
49. 'Observations', 105, 126, 134.
50. See above, 31-2.

51. Quoted in H Pearson, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev Claudius Buchanan DD, 2 vols, Oxford, 1817, I, 131-2.
52. *ibid*, 184.
53. Letter to Sir Alured Clarke, 4 May 1799, quoted in Memoirs and Correspondence of Marquess Wellesley, ed R R Pearce, 3 vols, London, 1846, I, 272-3. Wellesley believed there were not less than 150 Frenchmen in the area.
54. Copy letter, Fuller to Carey, 13 March 1796, AL MSS and Fuller to Fountain 25 Mar 1796, BMS MSS, H2/3.
55. Fuller to Carey, 12 April 1800, BMS MSS, H1/3.
56. Fuller to Carey, 18 Jan 1798, BMS MSS, H1/3.
57. Carey to Fuller, 16 Nov 1796, BMS MSS, IN/13.
58. Fuller to Sutcliff, 8 July 1800, BMS MSS, H2/bound volume 4. See also Fuller to Ward, 21 Sep 1800, BMS MSS, H1/1.
59. Fuller to Carey, 18 Apr 1799, BMS MSS, H1/3.
60. 'Advertisement strictly forbidding the embarking of British subjects to India without licence', 1799, IOR Personal Records, O/6/4, 301-2.
61. H Furber, Henry Dundas, Oxford, 1931, 57.
62. Despatches, Minutes and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley, ed M Martin, 5 vols, London 1836-7, II, 203-4. Cf John Cowie's similar opinion of Serampore in his letter to his brother 4 Oct 1798, LMS MSS, HO(Extra) 1/2/D.
63. Carey to Fuller 23 Nov 1800 and Ward's Journal, 29 June 1800, BMS MSS, IN/13 and IN/17.
64. Copy letter, Fuller to Saffery, 3 July 1800, AL MSS.
65. Forsyth to LMS, 9 Feb 1801, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/1/A.
66. *nd*, IOL, MSS Eur F89, Box 2c, Pt 5.
67. 3 Feb 1805, NUL MSS, PwJb.723.
68. Dundas to Minto, 1 June 1807 and Parry to Minto 1 Mar 1808, NLS MSS 1063, 14 and 11338, 49.
69. See, for instance, Toone to Hastings 28 Jan 1808, BL Add MSS 29183, 153-4.

70. Fuller to Ward, 10 June 1810, BMS MSS, H1/1.
71. Fuller to Chamberlain, 19 Aug 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2.

CHAPTER 3MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN INDIA 1793-1806a. North India

Just as Charles Grant did not give up his efforts to establish a mission in India, John Thomas, his agent at the abortive mission in Gaumalti, also did not abandon his hopes. Thomas's efforts led to more immediate results for he was instrumental in drawing the interest of his fellow-Baptist, William Carey, to India. In 1793, he and Carey set sail from England as the first missionaries of the newly formed Baptist Missionary Society. They sailed just after Wilberforce's defeat over the 'pious clause' and after the Court of Directors had renewed its standing order requiring the expulsion of all unlicensed persons arriving in India. No doubt prudently, the Baptists decided not to risk refusal by applying for licenses to reside in India.

On arrival in Calcutta, much to their surprise, they found that they were allowed to proceed as they wished. Carey soon decided to go up country. Lack of funds, not Company harassment, led him to this decision, for he needed a means of supporting his family while he was mastering Bengali.<sup>1</sup> He and Thomas eventually obtained employment as plantation managers for George Udny.<sup>2</sup> Supervising an indigo



plantation left considerable time for other activities, and Carey and Thomas made full use of this to preach to both Europeans and Indians. Local officials were well aware of their missionary activities and, far from being antagonistic, concurred in the deception of describing the missionaries as indigo makers on official returns. Despite the deception, it seems unlikely that the Bengal government did not know that they were missionaries almost immediately, as both Carey and Thomas had preached in Calcutta before going up country. News would have travelled quickly in such a small community of Europeans. The governor-general, Sir John Shore, a close friend of Wilberforce and Grant, certainly knew of their real character.<sup>3</sup>

The Baptists were not alone in attempting the evangelisation of Bengal at this time. In 1798, the SPCK was granted permission for William Ringeltaube, a graduate of Halle, to commence a mission in Calcutta. In the same year the Missionary Society<sup>4</sup>, established as a non-denominational society in 1795, sent out its first missionary to India, Nathaniel Forsyth. Like the Baptists, the LMS decided not to put the East India Company to the test by applying for licences. The Church Missionary Society, which was formed in 1799 as a specifically Church of England society, decided, however, that it must abstain from any involvement in India that was not wholly

legal. It feared that otherwise it would not obtain the patronage and support from the Church and secular establishment that it so earnestly desired.<sup>5</sup> The CMS did not therefore attempt to send missionaries to India at this time.

John Cowie, the brother of one of the LMS directors and a merchant in Cawnpore, expressed his surprise at the opposition of the Court of Directors to Haldane's mission scheme. He told his brother that "you need apprehend no kind of opposition from the servants of the Company here . . . none will vilify Christianity, the greater number are sober thinkers".<sup>6</sup> Cowie's forecast, on the whole, seems to have been borne out. Many Company officials helped and, until 1812, no missionaries were actually expelled from the country, despite their lack of licences. Forsyth preached in Calcutta without complaint although he did not settle there because of the cost of housing. The following extract from a letter of his to the LMS describes the way in which he was treated by Company officials. Forsyth wrote that he had been

enabled to live in peace and friendship as a member of civil and religious society, especially withall in the exercise of the magistracy and government of the country; from some of whom I have received particular marks of friendship and kindness - and by none . . . have I in any degree to my knowledge been opposed nor interrupted.

These comments are significant because it is generally thought that Forsyth fled to the Dutch colony of Chinsurah

because of opposition from the East India Company. However, his letters state quite clearly that the problem was expense not opposition. The governor-general knew of his presence in Bengal. Moreover, Forsyth was asked to preach in the hospital at Calcutta and Brown and Buchanan organised a public subscription for a chapel to be built for him to preach in. In any case, Chinsurah, to which he was said to have fled, was under British control in 1801.<sup>7</sup>

The first refusal by the Court of Directors to countenance a mission proposal was the 1796 'Haldane episode' discussed in the previous chapter. This did not seem to affect the missionaries already working in India. No new orders were sent out and the Baptists and Forsyth carried on without interference. The missionaries signed covenants with the Company which permitted them to live and trade in the country and Carey told Fuller, the Baptist secretary, that they were not obliged to conceal "ourselves or our works".<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, this was not to be confused with 'legal' permission to settle in India as missionaries or otherwise as Carey stressed to Fuller when he told him:

You must first drop your English ideas and get Indian ones. No such thing as a legal settlement, in the English sense can ever be made here - Because a general law has passed prohibiting Europeans settling in this country. This general law cannot be reversed, unless by the English Parliament. All Europeans therefore only reside here by connivance and some are permitted to stay in the country for a term of years: the Company having covenanted to protect such persons, while they observe the laws."<sup>9</sup>

Because of the regulations and the missionaries' illicit entry into India, it would have been possible for the Company to deport them in these early years. However, the Company also did not wish unnecessarily to arouse antagonism at home. Company officials in India did indeed 'connive' at the unlicensed presence of missionaries in British territory. The Baptists were not deported and, by 1800, Buchanan was able to assure Carey that the Baptists would be unmolested if they extended their missionary work to Calcutta.<sup>10</sup> A missionary station was accordingly established, chapels opened and they were soon conducting weekly services, prayer meetings with prospective converts and preaching. In 1804 Baptist stations were established at Cutwa and Jessore. The following year four more Baptist missionaries arrived, who were allowed to proceed as they wished. After 1799, there are but two recorded instances of restrictions on the part of Company officials. In 1802, Carey learned that one of the magistrates had asked if the Bengal government had approved the circulation of their tracts because a complaint about them had been made by some Indians. A serious discussion ensued over whether or not the Baptists should be permitted to preach or circulate anything without the approval of government. The magistrate proposed to bring the matter up at the governor-general's levee. Fortunately for the Baptists, Claudius Buchanan intervened and nothing more was heard of the matter.<sup>11</sup> The second occasion occurred in 1805 when the

magistrate at Dacca refused to allow Carey and another missionary to distribute tracts in his district.<sup>12</sup>

The missionaries were extremely fortunate that the men appointed as governor-general in these early years were well disposed towards them. A brief examination of the views of Sir John Shore [1793-1798] and Lord Wellesley [1798-1805] throws some light on both the consistency of Company policy towards missionary activity and the attitude of members of the secular Establishment towards Christianity in general and the propagation of the Gospel in the Empire in particular.

The evangelicals had great hopes that Sir John Shore would do much to facilitate the progress of evangelism in India as he was a devout Christian and had commenced his term of office resolved "to make it be seen that the Christian religion was the religion of the state."<sup>13</sup> To this end, he was also under considerable pressure from Charles Grant and William Wilberforce. Nevertheless, Shore found that he was unable to give his unequivocal support, finding it difficult to reconcile his responsibilities as governor-general with the duty to promote Christianity. At this stage in his life, he appears to have been more concerned with the lack of public virtue than with aggressive evangelism, of which he feared the political consequences. Shore's belief in the need for caution was expressed in a

letter to Henry Dundas in which he attributed the sepoy's loyalty to his high pay and "an indulgence to his habits, whether religious or otherwise". Shore expressed the belief that, if officers were to ridicule the ceremonials of the sepoys' religions or refuse to countenance them, "the bond of attachment would soon be dissolved, and disaffection and aversion be substituted for subordination."<sup>14</sup> The remark was to prove to be prescient. Shore was also worried about Indian hostility to the propagation of Christianity and was convinced that "if the attempt were made with the declared support and authority of Government, by the aid of misrepresentations it might excite alarm . . . ."<sup>15</sup> Shore was not prepared to risk the opposition that might be aroused by any appearance of government-sanctioned missionary activity. This is the great dilemma of foreign missionary activity. On the one hand, some government protection is needed if the personal safety of missionaries and converts is to be secured. On the other hand, opponents of missionary activity use any government involvement as a weapon to spread fears that conversion is the ultimate aim of the foreign government.

Paradoxically, Lord Wellesley, whose biographer tells us, "a less religiously-minded person . . . could hardly be imagined . . . ", earned himself the reputation of being a real friend to the cause of Christianity during his time as governor-general.<sup>16</sup> In one of his first despatches to the

Court of Directors he expressed his concern about the state of the ecclesiastical establishment in India and his determination to set it on a "respectable footing". His avowed aim was to "cherish in the minds of the servants of the Company a sense of moral duty".<sup>17</sup> He therefore supported the moral regulations drafted by Grant which were aimed at ensuring that Sundays were properly observed and that 'pernicious habits' such as gaming were stopped. Wellesley's new college for the instruction of Company servants was founded on Christian principles and he appointed the Evangelicals, Brown and Buchanan, to prominent positions and William Carey to be teacher, later professor, of Bengali.

Officially, Wellesley followed Lord Cornwallis in declaring that he would not allow "the slightest interference or even encouragement to be given by the Government to the conversion of the natives to the Christian religion".<sup>18</sup> One of his first acts as governor-general was to confirm the ancient Hindu and Muslim laws in all matters connected with 'religious prejudices'. He maintained that

it would not only be impolitic but highly immoral to suppose that Providence has admitted of the establishment of British power over the finest provinces of India, with any other view than of its being conducive to the happiness of the people, as well as to our national advantage.<sup>19</sup>

Arguing from the same basic premise as the evangelicals, that Providence had given India to Britain for a purpose,

Wellesley came to the opposite conclusion. Evangelicals believed that the happiness of India could only be obtained by its conversion to Christianity while Wellesley and most Company officials felt that Indians would be happiest if left to worship in their traditional ways. Lord Wellesley's attitude towards Indian religions was essentially pragmatic and is well-illustrated by his actions over the collection of pilgrim taxes in Orissa. In order to gain the support of the Orissa brahmins for his takeover in 1803/4, he promised to continue the existing system of the collection of pilgrim taxes under government superintendence. This decision of Wellesley's attracted strong protests from Grant and Parry when news of it reached England.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, Wellesley thought highly of the missionaries already in India and considered that their work, "unsanctioned by Government", was consistent with his policy of regard for the 'happiness of the people'. He publicly expressed his goodwill towards the Baptist mission and gave liberal subscriptions to their non-religious publications. He allowed the Scriptures to be translated into Indian languages, according to Sir George Barlow saying, "A Christian Governor could do no less; a British Governor could do no more."<sup>21</sup> Without Wellesley's encouragement and financial assistance, the Baptists would have found life very difficult.



The key to his attitude seems to have been the fact that he regarded the Church in particular, and Christianity in general, as a bulwark of the Constitution. Wellesley strongly believed that Christianity must be seen to be supported in a conquered country and took great care that he himself attended church regularly. It seems, therefore, that he supported the Baptists because, in the absence in India of sufficient clergymen of the Established Church, they were at least inculcating some moral values to the European population and demonstrating that religion was held in regard by the British. Another factor was the usefulness of Carey's skill as a translator.

The problem for the Dissenting missionary societies seems, therefore, to have lain more with the Court of Directors in England than the Company officials in India in these early years. The new missionary societies were sure that the Directors would not grant licences to their missionaries and in this they were probably right. Grant frequently advised them not to put the principle to the test and, because of his position in the Company, no-one was better placed to know this. A letter from Thomas Coke in December 1806 confirms this. Coke was still trying to start a Methodist mission in India with the help of Col Sandys, an ex-Company officer and, incidentally, a brother-in-law of Claudius Buchanan. Sandys waited on Teignmouth, Wilberforce and Grant, while Coke wrote to the Court of

Directors and Lord Castlereagh, who was president of the Board of Control, to solicit support for their plans. After seeing these men, Coke and Sandys came to the conclusion that "the Court of Directors would not consent to the establishment of a mission to India for the conversion of the natives, whether instituted by us or by the Established Church itself." However, Coke must have received some private assurances for he went on to add that he was also sure that "neither the Court of Directors, nor the government in India, would persecute us, if we establish a mission in India, but would perfectly connive at our proceedings."<sup>22</sup> The Company did not wish unnecessarily to arouse antagonism at home. The missionary leaders accepted this situation in these early years and an appeal to Parliament does not seem to have been considered either necessary or even an option. For many years the missionary societies laid siege solely to the Court of Directors in their attempts to have more done to further the propagation of Christianity in India.

On the spot, Carey felt the difference in attitude between the officials of the Company in England and in India. In 1795 he told John Ryland, a director of the BMS, that he had "no spirit for politics here for whatever the East India Company may be in England; their servants and officers here are very different. We have a few laws and nothing to do but to obey."<sup>23</sup> However, while the Baptists,

on the whole, were not hindered in their work by Company officers, they were encountering a certain amount of resistance to their work from Hindus and Muslims. This will be discussed briefly because it had an impact both on official attitudes towards the missionaries and on the role missionaries felt government should play in the propagation of Christianity in India. It is not part of this discussion to venture into the realms of the reasons for conversions nor, indeed, what constitutes a conversion.<sup>24</sup> What is important is that the Baptists were performing very few baptisms and this was a matter of great concern to them and contributed to a growing conviction that they needed more positive government support if they to make any real progress in India. The lack of baptisms and the evidence of opposition provided ammunition for those who were to argue later that missionary activity in India was a hopeless task that should not be encouraged.

According to the Baptist records, opposition to their presence first seems to have occurred about 1799 after their move to Serampore. In that year, Carey told the Baptist missionary secretary, Andrew Fuller, that "the Brahmins oppose the Gospel with the utmost virulence".<sup>25</sup> By 1801 Carey believed that things had taken a "new turn as it respects the temper of people in general; formerly what we said made no impression, the people heard like storks; now the most violent opposition is heard on every side."<sup>26</sup>

From this time, the Baptists often described the mocking and insults they had to endure while they were preaching, finding that "the greatest number mock, despise, or insult."<sup>27</sup> This seems to have happened once people started to realise that the missionaries were trying to wean them away from their own religions. Marshman wrote of how

wherever we have gone, we have uniformly found that so long as people did not understand the import of our message, they appeared to listen; but the moment they understood something of it, they either became indifferent or began to ridicule.<sup>28</sup>

The Baptists must also have had some bad experiences with Muslims because Ward wrote in his journal that the Muslims "cannot bear a single syllable of Mahometanism to be disputed. Every Mussleman is a murderer in his heart."<sup>29</sup> Such opposition from the Indian population was partly behind the early decision of the Baptists to employ their new Indian converts as catechists. <sup>The opposition</sup> It did not bode well for the future progress of Christianity in India.

The first intervention of the civil power to protect the Baptists came in the wake of their first baptisms in December 1800, eight years after Carey's arrival in India. According to Fuller, the conversions aroused "amazing attention both from natives and Europeans."<sup>30</sup> Ward wrote in his journal that the whole neighbourhood was in an "uproar" and over 2000 people assembled, "pouring out their anathemas on the new converts."<sup>31</sup> The families of the converts appealed to the Danish magistrate for redress and

the missionaries appealed to him for protection. This was to be an all too familiar story. While government officials proclaimed the maxim of religious neutrality, both Christian missionaries and their Indian enemies forced them to come down on one side or the other by seeking government interference at the first sign of trouble. In this case the magistrate decided in favour of the missionaries and intervened to protect the converts and the missionaries. Later he had to intervene again when one of the convert's daughters was kidnapped.

The intervention and protection of the Danish government was believed to be essential by the missionaries and Fuller went so far as to tell another Baptist leader that "were not the converts protected by the Danish magistrates, they would be in danger of being murdered; and as it is there is great wrath at work against them."<sup>32</sup> Marshman's daughter later wrote of how her father "sometimes returned home covered in blood from the stones and bricks thrown upon him, by those who were hostile to his preaching, and wished to stop it."<sup>33</sup> This statement seems to be confirmed by Marshman's admission in 1807 that what kept them from being massacred was the British government and therefore a missionary who was not loyal to it was neither prudent nor wise.<sup>34</sup>

Although no Protestant missionaries were murdered in the period 1793-1833, two converts were. The first recorded instance was that of Samdas, a Baptist convert who was murdered near Chinsurah in 1802. In 1830 Lacroix wrote of the murder of a convert at Howrah.<sup>35</sup> While murder was a rare occurrence, physical violence was often used against converts. The material costs in becoming a Christian were also very great with converts losing everything: home, family and livelihood. They became outcasts from their society in every sense of the word. The Baptists found that their catechists suffered even greater hardships, being "cruelly beaten by the mob & their lives threatened."<sup>36</sup> The Baptists put the blame for such opposition squarely on the shoulders of 'the brahmins' as did Forsyth of the LMS, who told his directors how brahmins were "likely to burn the Bible and that great caution was needed in dealing with them."<sup>37</sup>

One missionary, John Chamberlain, seems to have experienced more difficulties than most and this was probably due to his own indiscretion and hot-headedness. In 1804 he was prevented from building a bungalow at Cutwa by a 'mob'. In telling someone about this, Ward said that "the enmity against the gospel and its professors is universal."<sup>38</sup> But it was not just the hot-headed Chamberlain who was opposed. As late as January 1806 Ward wrote in his diary of how "multitudes follow our bretheren through the streets,

clapping their hands and giving them every kind of abuse."<sup>39</sup>

The Evangelical Company chaplains, although not treated with the same disrespect because of their official positions with the Company, also experienced Indian opposition to their efforts to proselytise. In 1807 great alarm was raised against Henry Martyn's school in Patna because of fears that the children were to be made Christian. There were similar fears in Dinagepore and Martyn wrote that some zamindars had withdrawn their consent to let him have a schoolroom. According to Martyn, the opposition was whipped up by schoolmasters not liking free schools. The teachers evidently spread rumours that the children were to be converted and sent to Europe. As a result the zamindars retracted their promises of land and parents refused to send their children.<sup>40</sup> Martyn was fortunate that his attempts to proselytise were not stopped by the Bengal government. His interest in converting the Indian population was well known to senior Company officials and his position as a Company chaplain could well have caused fears that the Company intended forcible conversions.

Neither the Baptists nor the Evangelical chaplains were happy with the situation. The lack of conversions, persecution of converts and the many instances of

opposition from Brahmins and others gradually convinced them that, without the support of the Company and the home government, the progress of Christianity in India would continue to be limited. They felt that their work needed more positive support in order to give them standing and respectability in India. What is more, they believed they needed the protection of government in order to avoid being murdered themselves. The missionaries rarely struck out into territory unoccupied by Europeans and the tendency was to station themselves near garrison towns. Nevertheless, at the same time they wanted to prosecute their work without hindrance from temporal authority. This occasionally brought them into conflict with Company officials who feared the results of some of their activities. These instances of conflict, however, were very few indeed and the Baptists did not yet feel it necessary to take any positive steps to improve their situation. On balance, the missionaries in this period gained much more from tacit government protection than they lost from any attempts to control them.

b. South India

The SPCK-sponsored missionaries continued their work in the Madras presidency with the permission and help of the Court of Directors, who continued to grant them free passages and a free mail service. Protestant missionary



interest had focussed on British territory because it was felt that the British government would countenance and protect their activities. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were nearly 6000 conversions in three years in the Tinnevely area, largely through the efforts of one of the native catechists of the SPCK. These mass conversions of low-caste Shanars aroused such opposition that the SPCK felt it necessary to petition the Court of Directors for protection for their converts whom, it claimed, were being badly persecuted both by the native authorities and their own fellows. According to the missionaries, Indian public servants were spreading false rumours to Parish, the Collector, painting the native Christians as conspirators against the British.<sup>41</sup> In 1806, the resident of Travancore, Col Colin Macaulay, invited the ex-SPCK missionary, William Ringeltaube, who had gone over to the LMS, to set up a mission station in south Travancore. According to Ringeltaube, without Macaulay's "fearless and determined opposition . . . to the native authorities none of their missionaries would have been able to set foot in the country."<sup>42</sup>

This positive support of missionary activity was in distinct contrast to the caution displayed by some Bengal officials. There seems to have been an easier attitude generally towards missionary activity in the south of India at this time. Christianity had been present in the south

for a very long time and Madras and Bombay did not have the responsibilities of the supreme government. In 1804, the SPCK and Royal Danish missionaries were joined by six LMS missionaries, the first to come to India since Forsyth's arrival in 1798. Despite arriving without licences, they were treated with great kindness by many Company officials. Alexander Falconer, the Chief Secretary of Bombay, was surprised to find that they had arrived without licences and told them these would be granted if requested. Capt Blackburn of Tanjore, who granted the passports for Madras, offered to do everything in his power to help and Sir Thomas Strange, judge of the Madras Supreme Court, told them that "so far as this Government or any one executing authority within its limits is concerned, you may proceed in your ministry with confidence, certain on all reasonable occasions of its support and protection."<sup>43</sup> On application to the government for permission to proceed to Ganjam, they were informed that "his lordship is pleased to permit you to proceed to Ganjam on the affairs of your mission, and that instructions have been issued accordingly for granting to you the necessary passports on your application for that purpose."<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, they were given letters of recommendation to a number of influential men. It is clear that the LMS missionaries had friends in high places in the Madras presidency, who spoke well of them to the governor.

The LMS missionaries, like the SPCK, were given financial rewards for the performance of divine service. All spoke with grateful thanks of the help which the government had given. Indeed they were so overwhelmed by the extent of official support that in September 1805 an LMS missionary wrote:

What change in regard to India has been produced within a few years. When Brothers Carey and Thomas came into this country they remained in a state of concealment about two years; whereas we have entered it at a favourable period when the Directors of the Honourable Company have issued orders that Missionaries be protected and favoured . . . .<sup>45</sup>

This is an enlightening extract for, in the first place, it shows that the myth has already become established that the Baptist missionaries had to hide from the authorities when they first arrived in India. Secondly, it is a slight distortion of the directive from the Court. The despatch referred to is the answer to the SPCK's request for protection for their converts in Tinnevely and is quoted at length because it clearly states the Company's policy towards all religions practised in India and the policy to be observed towards missionaries. The SPCK had expressed the hope that the Company would give orders which would prevent the persecution of converts and protect "the persons & labours" of their missionaries. The Court of Directors was

satisfied that there has been no intention in our government to act otherwise, we think it requisite only to state that, as we have never countenanced any species or degree of religious intolerance in the countries subject to your authority, and Mahomedans, Parsees, Hindoos, in all their varying sects, have been permitted to follow their separate persuasions, without

molestation, so it can be no question that all who profess the Christian faith, whether of European, Armenian or Indian race should enjoy the like privilege & protection. Therefore, officers of every rank, Europeans & natives, employed in the administration of our affairs, should confine themselves to these general principles, from which any deviation past or future must excite our disapprobation . . . and with regard also to the Missionaries, so long as they conduct themselves in a prudent & upright manner, as they appear hitherto to have done, we cannot doubt that their persons and office will be duly respected . . . .<sup>46</sup>

The policy of the East India Company towards missionaries had not changed from that set out in the earlier eighteenth century despatches. The LMS distortion lies in the fact that the despatch just quoted does not actually state that missionaries will be protected and favoured but rather says that all religions must be protected. The missionaries would be "respected" as long as they conducted themselves "in a prudent and upright manner." It also specifically referred to the SPCK missionaries, who had been countenanced for nearly a century. Nevertheless, the Dissenting missionaries regarded the specific mention of missionary work in this way as a significant step forward from the hostility displayed by the Court of Directors during the 1793 debate on the 'pious clauses'. The despatch implied an acceptance by the Court of Directors of missionaries in India, although only the SPCK was mentioned by name. It also gives the lie to the myth that missionaries were not 'tolerated' by the Company after 1793.

Indeed, the government of Madras had proved to be particularly helpful to missionary activity, both Catholic and Protestant. The provision of salaries to Protestant missionaries performing essential religious services for Europeans helped their missionary work. Loans were granted to the Catholic bishop of Verapoli and also to the Royal Danish missionaries when they were in financial difficulties.<sup>47</sup> The Court of Directors both knew of and approved these actions. Another extract from Cran's and Desgranges' journal from Vizagapatam on 26 June 1806 refutes the suggestion that the Madras government was hostile to missionary activity:

Every encouragement is offered us by the established government of the country. Hitherto they have granted us every request, whether solicited by ourselves or others. Their permission to come to this place; their allowing us an acknowledgement for preaching in the fort, which sanctions us in our work; together with the grant which they have lately given us to hold a large spot of ground every way suited for missionary labours, are objects of the last importance, and remove every impediment which might be apprehended from this source . . . . Many gentlemen in the country have expressed their willingness to assist us . . . .<sup>48</sup>

At this point, only the Baptists appeared to be unhappy with their treatment. They felt (as they did in England) that their activities were merely 'tolerated'. They believed that the promulgation of Christianity was a right, indeed, a duty, which should be carried out not only without hindrance or caveats of any kind, but also with the positive sanction of the Company and national government. They were angry about the judge at Dacca's interference.

This single instance of restriction made Carey decide that their 'illegal' position in India was untenable. As he told Fuller in December 1805, "as things stood we were subject to innumerable hindrances from the magistrates of the Districts, who in hindering us would only be doing their duty, as things now stood."<sup>49</sup> The next year the situation deteriorated even further when the Vellore Mutiny put the continuance of British missionaries in India in very real danger.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Carey's Journal, 13 Jan 1794, BMS MSS.
2. Udney was commercial Resident at Malda 1787-1799 and from 1801-7 was a member of the Supreme Council.
3. Carey to Fuller, 16 Nov 1796, BMS MSS, IN/13. In this letter Carey told Fuller that Shore "well knows our real business".
4. The society founded in 1795 was called the 'Missionary Society'. It did not become the 'London Missionary Society' until 1818.
5. The CMS was formed in 1799 by Evangelicals on the 'church principle' but not the 'high church principle'. Its directors were anxious to establish its respectability and acceptance within the Established Church and they feared the consequences of any actions which might be construed as illegal because this would give ammunition to their High Church opponents.
6. J Cowie to R Cowie, 4 Oct 1798, LMS MSS, HO(IE) 1/7/B. J Cowie was hardly a religious enthusiast. His brother was constantly trying to show him the error of his ways and his duty to help propagate Christianity in India.
7. 7 Sep 1801, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/1/A. See also letters of 9 Feb 1801 and 11 Dec 1802 in the same jacket. Chinsurah was taken by the British in 1795 and not returned to the Dutch until 1817.
8. Carey to Fuller, 22 June 1797, BMS MSS, IN/13.
9. Carey to Fuller, 17 July 1799, BMS MSS, IN/13.
10. Carey to Fuller, 23 Nov 1800, BMS MSS, IN/13.
11. Carey to Ryland, 17 Mar 1802, NRO, CSBC MSS, and Carey to Fuller, 21 Jan 1802, BMS MSS, IN/13.
12. Carey to Fuller, 10 Dec 1805, BMS MSS, IN/13.
13. Memorial Sketches of the Rev David Brown, ed by his wife, London, 1816, 303.
14. Memoir of the Life and Correspondence of John, Lord Teignmouth, ed by his son, 2 vols, London, 1843, I, 280-1.

15. Letter to Grant, 5 May 1794, quoted in *ibid*, 292.
16. I Butler, The Eldest Brother, London, 1973, 222-3.
17. Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy 1750-1921, ed A Berriedale Keith, 2 vols, Oxford 1922, I, 197.
18. See undated note by George Barlow in the Wellesley Papers, BL Add MSS 37201, 176. See also Ward's Journal, 15 March 1806, BMS MSS.
19. Speeches and Documents, I, 181 and 197.
20. Extract of Bengal Secret Consultations, 1 March 1804, contained in IOR Home Misc 59, 422-429.
21. Undated note by George Barlow in the Wellesley Papers, BL Add MSS 37201, 176. See also, Carey to Fuller, 27 Feb 1804, BMS MSS, IN/13.
22. Coke to [?], 10 Dec 1806, WMMS MSS, Home Correspondence, Box 1.
23. 27 Jan 1795, NRO, CSBC MSS.
24. There is a vast literature on conversion, most of it for Africa. For a contemporary account of Bengal, see W Pearce's 'On the Extent & Character of the Conversions to Christianity from Among the Natives in the Presidency of Bengal', a paper prepared at the request of the Calcutta Missionary Conference and contained in Serampore College archives. See also S Bayly, 'A Christian Caste in Hindu Society. . .', Modern Asian Studies, XV (1981). and 'Hindu Kingship and the Origin of Community . . .', Modern Asian Studies, XVIII (1984). An example for Africa is R Horton's , 'African Conversion', Africa, XLI (1971).
25. Carey to Fuller, 23 Nov 1800, BMS MSS, IN/13.
26. Carey to Ryland, 30 Jan 1801, NRO , CSBC MSS.
27. Letter 18 Dec 1801, cited in PA X, 226.
28. Marshman's Journal, 13 June 1802, PA XI, 273.
29. Ward's Journal, 28 Dec 1801, BMS MSS.
30. Fuller to Saffery, 6 Aug 1801, AL MSS.
31. Ward's Journal, 23 Dec 1800, BMS MSS and Fuller to Rippon, 26 March 1802, AL MSS.
32. Fuller to Saffery, 6 Aug 1801, AL MSS.



33. 'Memorial of the Life of Hannah Marshman' by Mrs Rachel Voigt, contained in BMS MSS IN/19.
34. Marshman to Ryland, 1807, BMS MSS, IN/19A .
35. Ward's Journal, 16 Sep 1802, BMS MSS.
36. Fuller to Sutcliff, 28 Dec 1803, BMS MSS, H2/bound volume 4.
37. 9 Feb 1801, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/1/A.
38. Ward's Journal, 3 June 1804, cited in PA XV, 38.
39. Ward's Journal, 29 June 1806, cited in PA XVIII, 245.
40. Journals and Letters of the Rev Henry Martyn BD, ed S Wilberforce, 2 vols, London, 1837, II, 28-9, 33.
41. R Caldwell, Records of the Early History of the Tinnevelly Mission of the SPCK and SPG, Madras 1881, 70.
42. Extract from Ringeltaube's journal, [1806?], Transactions of the Missionary Society, III (1813), 117.
43. Letter from Cran and Desgranges to Ringeltaube, 22 Jan 1805, LMS MSS, SI(Gen) 1/1/B.
44. Letter of 10 April 1805, quoted in Transactions of the Missionary Society, I(1804[6]), 314. Lord William Bentinck was governor.
45. 15 Sep 1805, Journal of Cran and Desgranges, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
46. Public Letter to Madras, 23 Jan 1805, para 16, IOR E/4/894.
47. See Board Collection 1550, IOR F/4/69 and Board Collection 4871, IOR F/4/222.
48. Letter 26 June 1806, cited in Cran's & Desgranges' Journal, quoted in Transactions of the Missionary Society, III(1813), 89-90.
49. 10 Dec 1805, BMS MSS, IN/13.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Vellore Mutiny

Just as a *modus vivendi* between the unauthorised missionaries and the British government in India seemed to have become reasonably well-established, tranquillity was shattered by a mutiny of the Company's sepoys in Vellore in the Madras Presidency. In this mutiny of July 1806 nearly 200 Europeans were killed or wounded. Shortly afterwards disturbances in the army also occurred at Wallahjabad, Nundidrug, Sankarydrug, Bellary, Hyderabad, Pallamcottah, Quilon and Bangalore. This unrest was a major set-back to the missionary cause in India because British opponents of missionary activity used it as proof that Indian religious prejudices were easily excited and that the greatest caution was needed in any interference with them.

The question of the causes of the Vellore Mutiny was a matter of fierce contention at the time. Lord William Bentinck, governor of Madras, placed chief blame on the recent introduction of new dress regulations for the sepoys. These regulations, amongst other things, forbade the use of caste marks and earrings with uniform, ordered the trimming of beards and included the wearing of a new style of headdress with a leather cockade. Bentinck

thought that these dress regulations, by infringing Indian religious and social customs, gave substance to rumours that there were intentions to convert the sepoys to Christianity. Statements at the commissions of enquiry held after the mutiny confirmed that such rumours had been circulating. The commander-in-chief, Sir John Cradock, who had signed the orders for the offending dress regulations, not surprisingly came to a completely different conclusion from Bentinck, stating that the crucial factor in the mutiny was the involvement of the Mysore princes imprisoned in the fort at Vellore, who merely used the dress regulations as an excuse to foment unrest. At home, the Evangelicals, Charles Grant and Edward Parry, were as keen as John Cradock to focus attention on Muslim intrigue in order to undermine the argument that the mutiny was directly caused by the sensitivity of the sepoys to their religious customs. They also pointed to general maladministration in the Madras presidency as a contributory factor. Their aim was to refute any suggestion that missionary activity had any role to play in the mutiny.'

This is not the place for a detailed examination of the causes of the Vellore Mutiny. What is important is that it provided strong arguments for the anti-missionary cause. Whether the mutiny arose simply because of antipathy to the dress regulations, through general discontent in the army,

as a result of Muslim intrigue, or, as is most likely, a combination of these and other factors, it nevertheless remains that at least some Indians believed there was a design to convert them to Christianity and reacted accordingly.<sup>2</sup> By 1806, Britain's new role as the paramount power in India, which had been strongly reinforced by the defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1799 and the Marathas in 1803-5, made the forcible conversion of the population seem a possibility. The mutiny demonstrated the fragility of British rule in India and its dependence on the loyalty of the sepoys. The anti-missionary lobby seized on all this to argue that it would be dangerous for the British government to allow British missionary activity to continue in India, particularly when, in their eyes, it was conducted by ill-educated and fanatical Dissenters.

A number of other developments were cited in order to strengthen the case that Indians believed the Company intended to convert them to Christianity. Firstly, there were now three English missionary societies operating in the Company's territories: itinerating, preaching and distributing thousands of tracts. Secondly, proposals for printing the Scriptures had appeared in the presidency Gazettes shortly before the mutiny.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, it was argued that some of the sepoys would have known that the establishment of Company chaplains had been increased the year before and that a number of Evangelical chaplains had

been sent to India.<sup>4</sup> This is unlikely. On the other hand, few sepoys would have been able to distinguish between chaplains of the 'official' establishment and 'unofficial' missionaries. Some LMS and SPCK missionaries performed the duties of Company chaplains in addition to their missionary work and Evangelical Company chaplains were doing what they could to further the conversion of India. Many sepoys would have known that the SPCK and Royal Danish missionaries and their native catechists were itinerating widely in the south. Vellore itself was one of the SPCK outstations. Finally, and probably most important of all, the SPCK missionaries were beginning to have some success in the south with mass conversions in the Tinnevelly area. Palamcottah, one of the cantonment towns, was in the centre of these conversions. The new converts were persecuted to such an extent that the SPCK petitioned the Company for protection. In the disturbances of 1806 blood was smeared on the door of the missionary Ringeltaube's church. Mass conversions and persecutions were bound to attract attention and would have been known in Vellore as many of the sepoys in the battalions stationed there came from Tinnevelly and Travancore.<sup>5</sup> When these developments were accompanied by measures such as the injudicious dress regulations and a proposal to remove boys from battalions on the coast to Cuddalore to teach them English<sup>6</sup>, it was relatively easy for disaffected Indians to put about the rumour that there was a concerted

plan on the part of the Company to convert the sepoys to Christianity.

It is not, therefore, surprising to find that missionaries were restricted after news of the mutiny reached Bengal. Sir George Barlow was interim governor-general at the time and the mutiny had a decided effect on his attitude towards missionary activity. One is left in no doubt of his opinions in a letter written to Sir Thomas Grenville in February 1807. In it Barlow wrote that he feared that "preaching Methodists and wild visionaries disturbing the religious ceremonies of the Natives will alienate the affections of our Native troops". This, in his view, would lead to the loss of India. He complained of an instance in which Carey had destroyed some clay figures. Barlow said this so infuriated the people who were carrying them that Carey was in real danger to his life.

Barlow's fears extended to Claudius Buchanan's proposals for an ecclesiastical establishment which he felt would give real substance to rumours that Britain intended to force Christianity on India. He particularly objected to Buchanan's statement that "a wise policy seems to demand that we should use every means of coercing this contemptuous spirit of our native inhabitants".<sup>7</sup> Barlow was totally at variance with Buchanan's assessment of the docility of Indians and informed Grenville that the Bengal

government had more than once "been compelled by the representations of many respectable natives . . . to restrain a discussion of religious topics" in the College of Fort William. He was in no doubt that "the security of the British empire in India should not be put at risk for the business of proselytisation", maintaining that

no danger can be so extreme, so absolutely beyond the levels of prevention or remedy as the prevalence of an apprehension among our native subjects, that Government meditates the project of their conversion . . . .<sup>8</sup>

Such sentiments boded ill for the progress of Protestant missionary activity in India. Barlow had already issued orders restricting the missionaries. William Robinson and John Chater, two Baptist missionaries who illegally arrived in India in September 1806 were ordered home. In addition, Barlow instructed the remaining missionaries not to interfere with Indian religious prejudices by preaching, instruction, distributing books and pamphlets and permitting converts to go into the country to preach.<sup>9</sup> This effectively meant an end to most of the Baptist missionary activities.

The Baptists regarded these restrictions as unprovoked and unnecessary. On the other hand, the LMS missionaries in India believed that Chater and Robinson were ordered home chiefly because they came on shore at Calcutta rather than

Serampore contrary to the express orders of government.<sup>10</sup> The LMS missionaries in the south seem to have been little affected. Perhaps this was because Lord William Bentinck, who was still in situ in Madras, was sympathetic towards their aims. In 1805 he had encouraged the Company chaplains, Kerr and Buchanan, to undertake surveys of the state of Christianity in the south. The only action he appears to have taken directly concerning missionaries was to publish a circular summoning all foreigners and missionaries to the council house to take an oath of allegiance to the British government.<sup>11</sup> In October 1806, Bentinck arranged for an allowance to be paid to the Royal Danish missionaries because of their distress during the French Wars. He also wrote privately to Grant telling him that he believed that the blessings of Christianity should be extended to Britain's Indian subjects through the medium of missionaries and that the SPCK missionaries deserved the protection of government because of their "considerable progress in conversions". The only caveat to be mentioned was Bentinck's opinion that it would be "impolitic" for Company chaplains to undertake conversions.<sup>12</sup>

Once the disturbances seemed to have ended, despite Barlow's private misgivings, restrictions were eased so that the Baptists could preach in private houses and circulate the Scriptures. The only activity to remain forbidden was the dispensing of tracts attacking Indian



religions. Even the deportation orders against Robinson and Chater were suspended. This was largely due to the efforts of David Brown, now senior chaplain in Bengal, and George Udny, Sir George's 'number two' on the Council.<sup>13</sup> All this happened before news of the mutiny had reached London.

The effect of the mutiny on attitudes seems to have been more marked in England than in India itself. Fuller told George Burder of the LMS that he thought the stir would blow over provided they kept their heads down and did not publish anything about their difficulties.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately for the missionaries, once news of the mutiny reached England in early 1807, certain 'old India-hands' vociferously expressed their misgivings about the wisdom of missionary activity conducted by 'fanatics' and an ecclesiastical establishment in India. Sweny Toone, one of the Company directors, told Warren Hastings that Buchanan's suggestions would be "fatal to our interests".<sup>15</sup> These men concurred with Barlow's fears that a full-scale ecclesiastical establishment, with a bishop at its head, would be regarded by Indians as giving government authority to attempts to convert the population and as such was even more to be feared than unofficial missionary activity.

The massacre of so many Europeans was deeply shocking and the Company and Board of Control had to be seen to act.

Both Bentinck and Cradock were recalled and emotive discussions took place about the causes of the Mutiny and the role missionary activity had played in the events. William Elphinstone, who was chairman of the Company at this time, was one of the most vitriolic as can be seen in the following extract from his Minute on the subject.

They [the EIC] are certainly canting and preaching away their authority in India. The very keystone of the arch of that authority is now in danger. The country can only be held by the native troops, and it is vain to disguise, that at this moment their attachment is now wavering. The operations of the missionaries (even admitting them to be well meant, which I very much doubt) and the numerous translations of the religious books of the Christians, have alarmed the sepoys, or rather have furnished a pretence for emissaries and evil designed persons to alarm them, with the idea, that the Company intend to make them all Christians. They would as soon be converted into as many devils  
 . . . .

The rest of Elphinstone's Minute mentions the low character of the converts, "the scum of the earth" and tries to make a connection between the Baptists and French infiltrators who, he claimed, were about to overthrow British rule. He had no doubt that "at this moment, all India is filled with caballing natives in the pay of the French". The Baptists had evidently not lost the taint of Jacobinism as far as Elphinstone was concerned. Nor did the Evangelical Company chaplains escape censure. Elphinstone stated that their "doctrines from the pulpit ought not to be tolerated" and disapproved of their patronage by Udny and Grant.<sup>16</sup>

Fear of the designs of the French often appears in the correspondence of those responsible for the government of India.<sup>17</sup> Robert Dundas told Lord Minto in June 1807 that he was concerned about the designs of France and Russia and reckoned that the overthrow of British power in India was a "constant object of Buonaparte's ambition".<sup>18</sup> William Bentinck told his father that "the predilection of the natives for the French is well known".<sup>19</sup> Private letters from Madras to the Court of Directors spoke of the general discontent of the natives and "the evil designs of the French emissaries". Such was the alarm aroused that Parry warned Minto that "Buonaparte is overrunning the world and threatens you in the East."<sup>20</sup> The opponents of missionary activity maintained that the only way to prevent damage from the French, was to "express our opinion, by an open & honest declaration, that we will not interfere with the religious opinions of the natives", otherwise Bonaparte would "not fail to avail himself of our criminal neglect . . .".<sup>21</sup> It is to be doubted whether anyone really believed that the British missionaries were conspiring with the French, but it could be argued after Vellore that missionaries contributed to a general atmosphere of disaffection from which the French could profit. The French threat reinforced fears of internal insurrection and added to the difficulties facing those wishing to promulgate Christianity in India. The missionaries in India reacted to these accusations by stressing their

loyalty to the British government and the Company. This was a direct parallel to the necessity for Dissenters in Britain at this time to assert their loyalty to the established government.

Fortunately for the missionaries, the Evangelicals Charles Grant and Edward Parry were returned as 'Chairs' the following year and it was largely due to their efforts that the effects of the opposition were limited. Grant told David Brown in India that there had been

an eager propensity to send out strong orders at once to restrain the missionaries, or, at least, to confine them to Serampore, and encourage our Government in the discountenance it has of late shown them . . . .

He went on to state that if he and Parry had not been in such influential positions "the tide was so strong that . . . orders of a very different kind would, in all probability, have been transmitted."<sup>22</sup>

Grant's assessment of the attitude of the Court of Directors is corroborated by the letters from Sweny Toone and John Scott Waring to Warren Hastings. Scott Waring wrote that nineteen of the twenty-four directors believed with him that strong measures should be taken by the Company and the Legislature against the missionaries.<sup>23</sup> Toone thought that the Chairs would not hazard the question in open Court "as the sence of the Court is decidedly the

other way, & were any thing to be proposed upon the subject by the zealots, it would end in sending an order out to send home the missionaries."<sup>24</sup>

An examination of the the measures taken by Grant and Parry to stem this opposition throws light on how the Court of Directors and Court of Proprietors could be manipulated by the Chairs and demonstrates the working relationship between the East India Company and the Government at this time. It also shows the growing influence of evangelicalism in England.

News of the mutiny reached England in February 1807. Toone made an issue of the destabilising effect of missionaries in India and pressed his fellow directors to take measures to expel or severely restrict them. Parry used his privilege as Chairman to avoid a formal debate and in the informal discussion on the subject, Grant went on the attack. Toone reported that he "gravely ask[ed] if we were disposed to trample on the Cross".<sup>25</sup> In the frequent absence of his ally, Baring, Toone did not press the matter.

Grant and Parry also feared the reaction of the Board of Control to the question. In May, in an attempt to forestall the Board from acting adversely towards missionaries, the Chairs muddled the waters by widening

the debate over the causes of the mutiny to criticisms of the whole of the Company's administration in India. They sent a letter to Robert Dundas, the president, setting out 'Observations on the state of affairs in India relative to the defects in the administration in general'.<sup>26</sup> This paper recommended that the whole of the Company's administrative system be investigated, made a number of suggestions and urged that the despatch ordering the investigation should be sent through the Secret Committee rather than through the Court of Directors. By this ruse they kept the missionary question out of open discussion in the Court of Directors and gained time. Thus to have gained time was very important. Grant wanted to use the opportunity to bring the question before the public and force their opponents to substantiate their facts.<sup>27</sup> The Court had not actually ordered the expulsion of the missionaries but it sent a despatch to Fort St George on 29 May, stressing the importance of toleration of Indian religious prejudices and stating that "when we afforded our countenance and sanction to the missionaries . . . it was far from being in our contemplation to add the influence of our authority to any attempts they might make . . . ." This was scarcely an approbation of missionary activity and seemed to the Chairs to open the way for Company servants in Bengal to restrict missionary work.<sup>28</sup>

Grant and Parry only signed the despatch because they were pressed to do so by the other directors. However, they were most unhappy about it and therefore felt it necessary to write strong letters to Lord Minto, Sir George Barlow and Robert Dundas, president of the Board of Control.<sup>29</sup> The letter to Dundas outlined their objections to the Court's despatch in some detail. It used the 'stick' more than the 'carrot' in putting forward their point of view. Starting with the stick, Grant and Parry threatened Dundas that any prohibition of the Gospel might "affect public opinion and the credit of the Company in the country". They cast aspersions on the Christianity of those who declared themselves to be against missionary activity in India and doubts on the reliability of their information. While the letter was mainly taken up with countering the facts and accusations of the anti-missionary lobby, Grant and Parry also stressed the cementing bond Christianity would provide between Britain and her Indian subjects, adding the rider that Christianity enjoined obedience to the civil power. These were the 'carrots'. In any case, they argued that there would be no danger to British attempts to convert India by "mild, affectionate persuasion" because Hindus were the "last of the human race to assert themselves" and Indians in general would not be capable of forming a politically dangerous combination against Britain.

A significant part of the letter consisted of distortions of the truth which Grant and Parry made in order to counter their opponents. Was this the 'wisdom of the serpent' or the 'innocence of the dove'? First of all, they denied that there were any missionaries in Vellore, its vicinity or in the Carnatic except for "a few Germans of the Society of Danish missionaries". In fact, in 1806, there were fourteen Protestant missionaries working in South India: seven SPCK, four LMS and three Royal Danish. While it might have been strictly true that no missionary went to Vellore in 1806, Vellore was an SPCK outstation. Missionaries had been itinerating in and near the Carnatic for many years. The Scriptures had been published in Tamil thirty years previously and the station was regularly visited at least until Gericke's death in 1803. Claudius Buchanan had visited Vellore shortly before the mutiny. To go on to state that Madras officials were not in a position to comment on the part missionaries might have played in the Mutiny because "they have seen no missionaries labour in that Presidency" was patently not true. There were both LMS and SPCK missionaries in Madras itself in addition to those elsewhere in British territory. It is also clear from the missionary correspondence that the governors and other influential officials knew of their presence in the presidency. Grant and Parry knew the situation in India very well. They read the reports of all the missionary societies and were in contact with the missionary leaders.



They were in close contact with several of the Evangelical chaplains who had been sent out to India under their patronage. This letter itself proves how up-to-date their knowledge was because in it they complain that the magistrate at Dacca had sent some Baptist missionaries away in 1805.

Perhaps Grant and Parry's greatest 'bending of the truth' was their statement that "all experience of the history of India for several past centuries shows no excitement or alarm at conversions" and that there were "no facts to support the supposed jealousy of the natives". They may well have convinced themselves that this was true and, until Vellore, there does not seem to have been any tumult directed against British rule on this score. However, by Grant's own admission when he put forward his 1786 proposal for a mission, government protection was essential because, without it, converts would suffer persecution and even death. Indeed, in 1805, as has already been stated, the Court of Directors had found it necessary to instruct its 'European and Native Officers' to ensure that converts were not persecuted. From the Baptist Periodical Accounts and private letters Grant and Parry would have known of the abuse and stone-throwing that often accompanied missionary preaching attempts.

From defence of the missionaries, Grant and Parry moved to the attack by pointing out the positive benefits of Christianity and stressing the argument in the 1786 missionary proposal that this was the only way to "supply a common bond between rulers and ruled." To push this point home they maintained that, had the sepoys been Christian, there would not have been a mutiny at Vellore. However, perhaps the most significant aspect of this letter was Grant's and Parry's unequivocal warning of public action if the Company did not allow missionary activity in India. Dundas was told that the Company was "already unpopular with a large proportion of the Community on account of their supposed dislike of the propagation of Christianity in India." They pointed out to him there were "very many respectable persons and entire classes of people in this country, who firmly hold the same opinion and who think it a reproach to the Nation that this opinion has not been more acted upon . . . ." They warned of "virulent attacks" on the Company to expected "from many quarters" and submitted "whether any cry raised on the ground of a prohibition to communicate Christianity to the natives of India, would be expedient for the Government of this country."<sup>30</sup>

To ensure that this threat was well understood in India as well as in England, Parry, in his capacity as chairman, also wrote to Lord Minto, warning the new governor-general

that "it would certainly not be in the interests of the Company to provoke afresh a very considerable body of the people in this country by proscription or persecution of a few missionaries . . . " as they would "undoubtedly" oppose a renewal of the Company's monopoly at the next renewal of the charter. Parry took a high tone with Minto, expressing his displeasure that missionaries had been forbidden to go into the interior and his expectation that this practice would cease. He concluded the letter with reminding Minto that the exclusion of the Gospel from India would "provoke the Great Being."<sup>31</sup>

The threat of public involvement seems to have had some effect on Robert Dundas. His letters demonstrate a concern that the Company should not unnecessarily alienate large numbers of the 'respectable public'. In December 1807 he told Sir George Barlow that "it would be a measure too revolting to our feelings in this country to prohibit the peaceable and unobtrusive circulation of translations of the Scriptures."<sup>32</sup> While this was far from an unequivocal sanction of missionary activity, it can nevertheless be regarded as an important step on the way.

Grant was also working in close collaboration with the Baptist and LMS leaders. This collaboration is set out in great detail in an extended letter from Fuller, the BMS secretary, to the missionary, Ward, in July 1807. First of

all, Grant advised Fuller to draw up a "fair and temperate statement of the truth" which could be shown to those in authority in order to remove some of the prejudices against the missionaries. Grant next suggested that Fuller should wait on Lord Teignmouth. Fuller found Lord Teignmouth to be "a most cordial friend". However, he "strongly dissuaded" Fuller from making any application to Government at present and advised that they should act "merely on the defensive".<sup>33</sup>

Lord Teignmouth also found it necessary to be 'economical with the truth'. He was torn between his own natural caution, his position as president of the British and Foreign Bible Society, for which he was trying to gain acceptance by the Established Church by distancing it from association with missionary activity, and his evangelical desire to see India converted to Christianity. He therefore denied to Minto that he and Grant were using their positions in the Company to promote conversion, that he knew of the presence of the Protestant missionaries while he was governor-general and that he was now in contact with them or Brown and Buchanan. He also denied that his society had given any donation to the missionaries. Lord Teignmouth by now was a member of the Board of Control. By the time he wrote this letter he had been waited on several times by Andrew Fuller and promised to use all his influence to help the cause. He had known

of the Baptist presence in India while he was governor-general. While he may not personally have corresponded with Brown, Buchanan or the missionaries, it is difficult to believe that he was not aware that, four months previous to writing this letter, his society had granted £1000 in aid of translations of the Scriptures in India, with Fuller of the BMS in attendance, to be disposed of by a committee of the Baptist missionaries and Evangelical chaplains.<sup>34</sup>

The missionaries were fortunate that none of the complaints from India were made officially but rather were private communications. This enabled the Chairs and Lord Teignmouth to ignore them and to complain to Dundas that official notice was being taken of private letters. Nevertheless, Grant knew that their difficulties were not over and warned Fuller that "some side blows against missions" might well occur at the next public meeting of the proprietors to be held on 17 June. A motion had been put to discuss the "business of Vellore." At this point, the LMS leaders were urging Fuller to "move heaven and earth" to raise the proprietors against the directors, which was contrary to the advice given him by Lord Teignmouth. Influenced by this and from his own conviction, Fuller argued strongly against such a step, maintaining that "we could not do it; and if we tried and failed we should ruin our cause."

Fuller preferred to use the conventional method of influencing politicians and directors behind the scenes. He therefore called on Lord Wellesley and Lord Teignmouth. Lord Wellesley was friendly and exonerated the Baptists from any blame for Vellore, although he was not certain that it might not have been aided by the intemperate zeal of some of the missionaries on the coast . . . ."

Wellesley said that he regarded it as his duty to help the missionaries as far as he could do so "without implicating Government, or causing it to be considered as patronising [missions]." These were kind words but gave no promises. Lord Teignmouth was far more positive in his words, expressing himself "willing to do anything in his power for you & resolved to make use of his influence." Lord Teignmouth on the occasion of a second interview with Fuller showed him a representation he "had drawn up in favour of missions" but would not tell Fuller what use he intended to make of it. Finally, Fuller also waited on Robert Dundas, whom he hoped had now been made more amenable by representations from Grant and Parry to his father, Lord Melville.<sup>35</sup>

The missionary society leaders and Grant and Parry waited for the threatened discussion on Vellore on 17 June with differing hopes. On the one hand, the Baptists and LMS hoped that the question would come on. Grant and Parry, on the other, did not, concurring in Toone's belief that the

Evangelicals would be outvoted. For all their threats of bringing in public opinion, in their private letters to Dundas and Minto the Chairs expressed the belief that the time was not yet ripe. The missionary leaders felt that Grant's reluctance to bring the issue forward was "timid and irresolute". Grant sharply countered by asking Fuller what they proposed to do if they were outvoted: appeal to the Board of Control or perhaps even the King? To demonstrate how difficult their task was, Grant showed Fuller letters which had been received by the Board of Control which would convince him of "the prejudice and power which [missionaries] have to encounter" and that the "principal danger arose from the Board of Control". After this conversation Fuller felt that they were like the 300 Greeks facing the army of Xerxes at Thermopylae and decided that the time was not yet ripe to bring in the 'religious public'.

The caution of the Chairs was vindicated and Fuller wrote that Parry had been able to talk to the mover of the resolution to be brought forward at the 17 June Court of Proprietors meeting beforehand and had "so neutralized him, that his motion passed over as mere milk and water, and no reflections whatever were thrown out agst the missions."<sup>36</sup> Grant's next step was to tell Fuller to send the 1000 printed copies of the statement he had earlier advised him to prepare, "folded in white paper" to "all the Directors .

. . to all the members of the Board of Controul - to the principal members in the administration - to several members of the Nobility - and to certain female branches of the Royal family". This was to be followed up by waiting on the directors and the president of the Board of Control. The aim of this was to conciliate and to judge the degree of opposition that might be expected in future.

Fuller's interview with Robert Dundas was satisfactory and demonstrates the degree to which Grant's and Parry's tactics had borne fruit. Dundas did not mention the illegal nature of the Baptist presence in India and agreed that the conduct of the missionaries had been "highly proper". However, he stressed that they must be cautious and particularly mentioned a pamphlet of theirs, The Gospel Messenger, that had been drawn to his attention and of which he did not approve. In it the writer told the Hindus that their "shasters were found in fable and are fit for women and children rather than men". As Dundas pointed out to Fuller, this was "provoking" and if "we were told, we could not bear it". The warning was too late to avert the storm that was to break out in India later that year over another Baptist pamphlet: the 'Persian Pamphlet' affair. In reply to the criticism, Fuller pointed out that the pamphlet had been written by a convert and told Dundas that he "must not compare a high-spirited Englishman with a Hindoo. They will bear that and much more without



being in a passion, or without any tumult being excited." He then went on to impugn the Christianity of the opponents of missionary activity, a favourite tactic of the missionary lobby. It was a charge to which the anti-missionaries felt very sensitive, both because they did not wish to be publicly regarded as bad Christians or, worse still, as deists and atheists, and because most of them genuinely regarded themselves as being good Christians. Keeping to the high moral ground, Fuller then requested an assurance from Dundas that the Baptists should not be judged by private letters and rumours, but by explicit accusations. This, Dundas agreed, was only "fair".

Emboldened by Dundas' treatment of him, Fuller next asked for an "express permission, or what perhaps wd be called a toleration, allowing us to itinerate and settle missionary stations in the country that we might not be interrupted by magistrates". In reply, Dundas thought that "perhaps in four or five months, you might obtain it". Nevertheless, Fuller was under no illusions about the degree of countenance to be expected from the Company. His interviews with the directors had shown that the missionary lobby had about four or five friends amongst them, the same number of enemies, with the rest neutral. Fuller told Ward that even the 'friendly' directors "dwelt on the necessity of our proceeding slowly and cautiously in

preaching to the natives." Fuller concluded from this that if official permission were ever to be granted by the Company for missionaries to operate in India, it would be "under some restrictions which may prove injurious."

The close of Fuller's letter also intimates that the Dissenters were not completely confident of the support they would get from Grant and Parry. Burls, the secretary of the LMS, pointed out to Fuller that Parry had only mentioned obtaining permission to preach for the missionaries already in India. On mentioning this to Grant, Grant replied that "if we can but get the principle admitted, everything else will follow of course". The Church Evangelicals aimed at achieving far less than the Dissenters were happy with and this division will be seen more clearly in the immediate lead up to the 1813 renewal of the Company's charter.<sup>37</sup>

Fuller's use of the word 'toleration' to Dundas is significant and appears again and again in pamphlets, letters and petitions. 'Enthusiasm' was a word of opprobrium at this time but so, too, was 'intolerance'. Both pro-missionaries and anti-missionaries claimed that religious toleration in India was what they sought. Supporters of missionary activity wanted toleration for Christianity in India. By this they meant no restrictions on the peaceful propagation of the faith and protection for

their converts. They regarded the late measures of the Bengal government against missionaries as not merely intolerance of Christianity but persecution. Their opponents, on the other hand, believed that preaching, itinerating and distributing tracts was intolerant of Indian religions.

Arguments were based on perceptions of the relationship of British government to Indian religions. The missionary lobby vehemently argued that a Christian government had a positive duty not only to protect Christianity but also to do all in its power to facilitate the peaceful conversion of the population. Men like Hastings, Toone and Scott Waring, however, argued that Britain's Indian government was not Christian but Hindu and Muslim, administered by Christians for their benefit. In support of this argument, it was pointed out that the Company had pledged itself to protect Indian religions and that it administered the country as far as possible according to Hindu and Muslim law. In other words, there were three established religions in India, Christianity for Europeans and Hinduism and Islam for Indians. The Company's prime consideration, however, was political not religious: the tranquillity of India. To this end, the Company not only 'tolerated' Indian religions but adopted the Mughal policy of supporting certain temples and festivals by collecting pilgrim taxes, giving police support and even attending

important festivals. This, in the eyes of the evangelicals, was a very grave national sin.

However, the evangelicals, particularly the Dissenters, were also arguing for religious toleration in India in another sense. They wanted toleration for their own brand of Christianity. There had been no instances of restrictions on the activities of the SPCK-sponsored missionaries, while the Dissenting missionaries had experienced several curtailments to their activities, not to speak of the necessity of having to reach India by clandestine means. The Dissenters wanted to be treated on the same terms as the SPCK. They regarded the struggle to open India to missionaries clearly as part of their wider campaign for religious toleration in England. The Church Evangelicals, bridging the gap between Church and Dissent, were pulled in both directions and their actions necessarily were often ambiguous. Lord Teignmouth felt the tensions particularly acutely.

Parry's action in neutralising the discussion on the 17 June did not, however, stem the opposition but drove the opponents to renewed activity. Thomas Twining, a leading proprietor, was not prepared to let the matter rest and in October 1807 published an open letter to Parry as chairman, pointing out the extreme danger of missionary activity and predicting the loss of India if Indian

religious prejudices were interfered with.<sup>38</sup> By this he hoped to provoke an open discussion in the December meeting of the General Court of Proprietors.

In December, Major John Scott Waring took Twining's argument a step further and urged the "immediate recall of every English missionary and a prohibition to all persons dependent on the Company from giving assistance to the translation or circulation of our holy Scriptures." Furthermore, he argued that the distribution of free bibles should be forbidden.<sup>39</sup> His arguments were given more weight because news had recently been received of further disturbances in South India between August and December 1806.<sup>40</sup> These two pamphlets started a virulent 'pamphlet war' between the supporters and opponents of missionary activity.<sup>41</sup>

Scott Waring did not restrict himself to general criticisms of missionary activity but also made personal attacks on the Baptist missionaries, calling them "dangerous maniacs", "mischievous madmen" and describing their preaching as "puritanical rant of the most vulgar kind".<sup>42</sup> Such language was designed to appeal to those who had no liking for evangelicals and was part of an attempt to separate members of the Established Church from Dissenting supporters of missionary activity. By ignoring the SPCK missionaries in India, who after all, were not English, men

like Scott Waring and later Sidney Smith in the Edinburgh Review<sup>43</sup> could maintain that Baptist missionary activity was a danger to India at the same time as avowing themselves to be good Christians who eventually wanted to see India converted. For some reason, the LMS missionaries seem to have escaped censure, possibly because their presence in India had gone unnoticed. The widely-circulated Baptist Periodical Accounts brought the Baptists to the notice of thousands and gave ammunition to both opponents and supporters of missionary activity.

Scott Waring's excessive language harmed his case. The supporters of missionary activity immediately counter-attacked and even the cautious Lord Teignmouth felt that he had to come out in public support of the missionary cause, although he delayed the publication of his pamphlet until well into 1808.<sup>44</sup> Scott Waring did not succeed in his aim of dividing the missionary lobby. Both Church Evangelicals and Dissenters realized they had more to lose than gain by separation. However, Church Evangelicals had long been playing the 'Establishment card'. Grant's 1786 'Proposal', the formation of the Church Missionary Society, Evangelical involvement in the British and Foreign Bible Society and Buchanan's Memoir were all attempts to persuade the Church of England to take the lead in forwarding missionary activity in India. The tensions inherent in this situation were to get worse over the next few years.

Twining's planned motion for a discussion of the missionary question was due to take place in the General Court on 23 December. Twining told Scott Waring that he believed he would be "very powerfully supported" as he had found that there were "but three in the Direction who think differently from him". [Grant, Parry and Robert Thornton]<sup>45</sup> Robert Dundas' position by this stage is set out in his secret letter to Sir George Barlow of 11 December 1807. In this letter, Dundas mentions that there were two extremes of opinion in the Court of Directors: those who contended that no missionaries should be suffered to remain in India and those who maintained that, on the contrary, more missionaries should be sent out. Dundas, for his part, was fully persuaded that "the extremes of both sides ought to be avoided". While agreeing with the missionary party that up to now missionary activity had not been attended with injurious consequences, he pointed out that this was because their numbers had not been sufficient to excite alarm and because their general conduct had been prudent and conciliatory. However, he was in no doubt that

. . . if, in any instance, the intemperate zeal of individuals should lead them to outrage the feelings of the people, and endanger the public tranquillity, they should forthwith be sent out of the Company's territories, and prohibited from returning.<sup>46</sup>

It seems that the anti-missionaries misjudged their support and the determination of Grant and Parry to use every weapon available to them to stem the opposition. By

14 December, the opponents of missionary activity were beginning to realise the strength of the opposition. Scott Waring wrote to Warren Hastings to say that Parry and Grant were "indefatigable in their endeavour to persuade the proprietors that this question is agitation from factious motives . . . to gratify private resentment." Scott Waring does not make clear what he meant by this, but it seems the Chairs were doing their best to discredit the opposition.<sup>47</sup> Twining in the Court meeting on 23 December felt it necessary to state that he was not influenced by personal hostility in pressing his case.<sup>48</sup> The Chairs were also reported to be using "every means in their power to induce Twining to give up his intended motion" including telling him that "he could not second the views of Buonaparte so completely, . . . by bringing it on".<sup>49</sup> No doubt they also reiterated the charge that the opponents of missionary activity were 'disposed to trample on the cross', in order to make the point that the British, like the Dutch in Japan, were prepared to sacrifice religion for material advantage.

Scott Waring by this time feared the unity and strength of the evangelicals, telling Hastings that

these religionists are a strong and very powerful body indeed, and take the subject as a national question, they act as one man, that is the evangelical part of the Church of England, of which the Bishop of London is the head, the Calvinists, and Arminian Methodists, and Dissenters of every description except the Presbyterians who I believe as a body have good sense . . . .<sup>50</sup>



The evangelicals demonstrated their strength by calling a meeting of the friends of missions on 21 December which appointed a committee to "watch over the motions of the enemy". In addition, Fuller was asked to publish a pamphlet answering the objections of Twining and Scott Waring. He was also advised to wait again on Lords Wellesley and Teignmouth to request their support in the Ministry and Board of Control respectively.<sup>51</sup> By this time, Scott Waring believed the missionary lobby had the support of five or six of the Company's directors.<sup>52</sup>

The pressure on Twining worked and by 21 December, he seems to have felt the strain of the abuse heaped on his head by the evangelicals. According to Scott Waring he went to the Chairs and told them that "if they would promise that the subject should be seriously taken up by the directors he would abandon his motion." In response, the Chairs assured Twining "that very strong orders had already been sent and indeed, that the subject would be further considered by the court - this they engaged to state from behind the bar at the general court" [at the regular quarterly meeting to be held on 23 December]. On this assurance, Twining abstained from making a formal motion, stating in the Court on the 23rd that although he believed that "any interference with religious prejudices would have serious consequences", he was also "convinced that a public

discussion of the question in a general court would have serious consequences" and the "heated discussion" that would ensue "should not reach the ears of the natives". He felt it necessary to stress his loyalty to his religion which he valued "infinitely more than my existence". Twining then requested the Chair's assurance that "the Court of Directors really is disposed to pay every attention to the religious opinions of the natives of India, and if you will, moreover, assure me that measures either have been, or shall be adopted, tending to restore and preserve to the natives, that perfect and happy tranquillity in their religious concerns" it would "remove the necessity for further proceedings."

"Whether from design or confusion", Parry did not give the definite assurance that Twining was looking for. Andrew Fuller, who was seated in the gallery, told Ward that Parry "refused any other than a general answer, that the Directors wd do that which appeared to be the best". Twining then went away "threatening to call a special meeting". Fuller believed that the missionary lobby had "a decided majority of proprietors" in their favour.<sup>53</sup> It seems likely that the Chairs' omission was by design. For all the threatening of bringing the matter before the public, the last thing Parry and Grant wanted was a public discussion. Their letters demonstrate how vulnerable they felt. In this, unlike the parallel evangelical

campaign for the abolition of the slave trade, the missionary lobby did not have powerful support at a national political level. Whigs in general were not favourable to missionary activity as they regarded this as positive interference with the liberty of other religions. The attitudes of most Churchmen ranged from lukewarm to positively hostile. The Archbishop of Canterbury stated what was probably the opinion of most of the 'Establishment' when he was prepared to admit that the object of Buchanan's scheme was "reasonable" and "should not lightly be abandoned" but that care should be taken that the plan was implemented "not in the spirit of making proselytes but with the sober wish to maintain, in its purity and strength, Christianity among Christians." He concluded by telling Buchanan that the conversion of India to Christianity was "a result devoutly to be wished, but not impatiently pursued."<sup>54</sup>

The opponents of missionary activity did not consider themselves defeated and in January Sir Francis Baring tried to bring the matter formally before the Court of Directors. However, Baring was ill on 28 January when the matter was due to be brought up. On 30 January the Court proceeded to debate the matter in his absence. The result was a decisive 13:7 defeat for the opponents of missionary activity. In his despair, Toone told Hastings:

the Saints are elevated - I never loved them, but now I detest them, as far as bears relation to this

particular subject. Sir Hugh [Inglis] has pledged himself to bring it forward again. But we shall not have any success. Sir Hugh, Sir Wm Metcalfe and myself fought side by side to very little purpose.<sup>55</sup>

Fuller felt the danger was over. While he admitted that some of the evangelical pamphlets had made an unfavourable impression, and that Twining had much weight with the directors, he did not fear the opposition because to balance this the missionaries had "many hearty friends in every department" and he believed that "of late that Government lean more on the favourable than on the unfavourable side." The evangelical tactics of working quietly behind the scenes to influence 'those who counted' appeared to have worked.<sup>56</sup>

The vote in the Court of Directors of January 1808 was an important victory for the evangelicals. It demonstrates that their arguments that the missionaries were of good character and that their work did not excite alarm had largely been accepted by the Court of Directors and Board of Control. The anti-missionary leaders had failed to obtain any firm support. They did not have the political weight of men like Grant, Lord Teignmouth and Wilberforce. Scott Waring's exaggerations had done little to enhance their cause. Another factor in the success must undoubtedly have been the Company's concern at the possibility of losing its monopoly at the impending renewal

of the charter. The directors knew they needed all the support they could get and did not want unnecessarily to alienate a large body of people who had threatened to put pressure on Parliament to remove the monopoly if any untoward steps were taken against missionaries. While the role of Grant and Parry in this success should not be underplayed, Fuller's contribution was also great. He was the link between the Church Evangelicals and the Dissenters and displayed considerable, energy, ability and tact in following Grant's advice and his own inclinations. Most important of all, he took care "not to divide the friends of Christianity, or to make enemies of any of them." He therefore made no public comment about Buchanan's proposals for an ecclesiastical establishment. Fuller also did not allow such sentiments as those expressed by Barrow in his prize sermon preached at Oxford to sour his relationship with Church Evangelicals. This was restraint indeed for Barrow had recommended that ministers of the Church of England should make "one uniform and general attempt to the exclusion of all others, where we have the power to exclude [Dissenters]", under the authority and regulations of an act of the legislature."<sup>57</sup>

Although the leaders of the missionary cause had feared the result of any public discussion of the question, they could not avoid it because of the actions of Twining and Scott Waring. In the event, the bringing of the matter before

the public was of more benefit to the missionary lobby than to the Company. The public discussion of the question helped to lay the ground for the parliamentary campaign of 1812-13. By this time, there were few who were prepared to argue against the principle of propagating Christianity in India. However, this is not to say that there was agreement on how this could best be done. While most felt that the circulation of the Scriptures was acceptable, it was difficult for Company servants and politicians, faced with responsibility for the stability of Britain's Indian possessions, and the deep attachment of Indians to their religions, unequivocally to sanction missionary activity. Cornwallis, Shore, Wellesley and Bentinck had all maintained that Company servants could not support missionary activity in their official capacity although they were prepared to protect missionaries from persecution and to give them non-missionary employment such as that of Company chaplain or translators.

As in the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade, the question was regarded as a political issue. The events of 1806-7 demonstrated clearly to the evangelicals that they had gone as far as they could with the Company. Although they had achieved a significant success in preventing any harsher measures against the missionaries, they were no further forward on the matter of licensing or the possibility of more restrictions at a future date. The

furore after Vellore, however, had demonstrated that a number of people felt that any help given by the Company to missionaries would be regarded as undue interference by the Indian people. It began to appear that change would only come about by legislative decision. Parliament, however, was unlikely to make any change in the Company's charter until it was persuaded not only that the measure posed no danger to Britain's possession of India but also that it was in Britain's best interests.

# Notes to Chapter 4

1. See the voluminous correspondence held in the IOL, especially Home Misc 690 and 816, E/1/119, E/4/69-71, E/4/334, E/4/900, F/2/2, L/PS/1/10, L/PS/5/31, L/PS/5/280 & Board Collection F/4/222. See also Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay Political and Secret Diary 192 of Oct 1806.

2. For modern interpretations of the causes of the mutiny, see for instance, P Chinnian, The Vellore Mutiny 1806, Erode, 1982, which gives a very anachronistic, 'nationalist' approach to events; S K Mitra, 'The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the Question of Christian Missions to India', Indian Church History Review, VIII (1974), and E R Talbot-Rice, 'Sudden Anger or Premeditated Plot: Vellore and the Aftermath', The National Army Museum Magazine 1985. See A D Cameron, 'The Vellore Mutiny', unpublished PHD thesis, Edinburgh, 1984 for the most recent detailed discussion of the Mutiny and its causes.

3. Carey to Fuller, 26 Aug 1806, BMS MSS, IN/13.

4. Grant to Bentinck, 18 April 1807, NUL Portland MSS, PwJb.218.

5. Copy evidence of Major Trotter, Lt Coombe and Mrs Pritchard held in Maharashtra State Archives Political and Secret Diary 192 of Oct 1806, 28-32. R E Frykenberg, in his article 'New Light on the Vellore Mutiny', in East India Company Studies, ed K Ballhatchet and J Harrison, Hong Kong, 1986, is sure that sepoys and local Muslim elites had noticed these conversions. For SPCK report of the persecutions, see Abstract of the Annual Reports and Correspondence of the SPCK, London, 1814, 539.

6. Scott Waring to Hastings, 15 May 1808, BL Add MSS 29183, 267-8.

7. C Buchanan, Memoir on the Expediency of Establishing an Ecclesiastical Establishment in British India, London, 1805, 31.

8. Barlow to Grenville 17 Nov 1806 and 12 Feb 1807, Scottish Record Office MSS, GD 51/3/126 and 132. Grenville was president of the Board of Control 15 July - 30 Sep 1806.

9. Carey to Fuller 26 Aug 1806, BMS MSS, IN/13.



11. Desgranges' Journal, 16 July 1807, LMS MSS, SIJ.
12. Bentinck to Grant, 20 Oct 1806, copy in NUL Portland MSS, PwJb.727.
13. Extract of a letter from Brown to Grant, 2 Sep 1806, BMS MSS, H2/bound volume 3.
14. Fuller to Burder, 9 April 1807, BMS MSS, H1/4.
15. Toone to Hastings 4 May 1807, BL Add MSS 29812, 171-2.
16. Minute 'On Missionaries', nd, IOL MSS Eur F89, Box 2c, pt 5.
17. The Bombay Political and Secret Diaries held in the Maharashtra State Archives are full of reports of suspicions of French intrigue for the years 1800-1810.
18. Dundas to Minto, 1 June 1807, NLS MSS 1063, 3 et seq.
19. Lord William Bentinck to his father, 3 Feb 1805, Portland MSS PwJb.723.
20. Parry to Minto 15 June 1807 and 1 Mar 1808, NLS MSS 11338, 11 et seq and 43 et seq.
21. Toone to Hastings, 28 Jan 1808, BL Add MSS 29183, 153.
22. Letter from Grant to Brown, 20 June 1807, cited in H Morris, Life of Charles Grant, London, 1904, 300-301.
23. Scott Waring to Hastings, 4 Dec 1807, BL Add MSS 29183, 43-44.
24. Toone to Hastings, 27 May 1807, BL Add MSS 29182, 210.
25. *ibid*, 4 May 1807, 171.
26. President's Secret Correspondence, 18 May 1807, IOR L/P&S/3/3, 1 et seq. Robert Saunders Dundas was Henry Dundas' son, who became Lord Melville in 1811.
27. Fuller to Ward, 9-19 Jul 1807, BMS MSS H1/1.
28. Political letter to Madras, 29 May, 1807, para 7, IOR E/4/900.
29. Grant to Brown, 20 June 1807, H Morris, Life, 301.

30. Parry and Grant to R Dundas, 8 June 1807, Bodleian MSS Eng.Hist.C.210.
31. Parry to Minto, 15 June 1807, NLS MSS 11338, 11 et seq.
32. Dundas to Barlow, 11 Dec 1807, NLS MSS 1063, 199 et seq.
33. Fuller to Ward, 9-19 July 1807, continued 19 July, BMS MSS, H1/1.
34. Teignmouth to Minto, 12 Nov 1807, NLS MSS 11338, 34 et seq. See also his letter to Owen, 23 Nov 1807, Memoir of the Life and Correspondence of John Lord Teignmouth, ed by his son, 2 vols London, 1843, II, 134 in which Minto stated that he had written privately to the Chairman that he "thought it of importance, for the credit and interest of the Bible Society that it should not be identified with missionaries or missions".
35. Fuller to Ward, 9-19 July 1807, BMS MSS, H1/1. Evidently Grant had written to those who would "with most effect" speak to Lord Melville [Henry Dundas], who "actually rules India".
36. *ibid.* See also IOR B/246, 217-227 for the official record of the meeting.
37. Fuller to Ward, 9-19 July 1807, BMS MSS, H1/1.
38. T Twining, A Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company on the Danger of Interfering in the Religious Observances of the Natives of India, London, 1807.
39. J Scott Waring, Observations on the present state of the East India Company . . . ., 3rd edn, London, 1807, XVII.
40. See letter from Scott Waring to Hastings, 26 Nov 1807, BL Add MSS 29183, 19-20.
41. For a detailed discussion of this 'war' see Jorg Fisch, 'A Pamphlet War on Christian Missions in India 1807-1809' in Journal of Asian History, 1985, This article includes a discussion on toleration and persecution.
42. J Scott Waring, Observations, LV, LX & LXV.
43. Edinburgh Review, April 1808, XII, 151-181.
44. Lord Teignmouth, Considerations on the Practicability, Policy and Obligations of Communicating to the Natives of India the Knowledge of Christianity with Observations on

the 'Prefatory Remarks' to a Pamphlet by Major Scott Waring, London, 1808.

45. Scott Waring to Hastings, 12 Dec 1807,  
BL Add MSS 29183, 58

46. Dundas to Barlow, 11 Dec 1807, NLS MSS 1063, 199 et  
seq.

47. Scott Waring to Hastings, 12 Dec 1807,  
BL Add MSS 29183, 58.

48. See report of the meeting in The Asiatic Annual Register, Vol IX, London, 1809, 31.

49. Scott Waring to Hastings, 14 Dec 1807,  
BL Add MSS 29183, 64.

50. *ibid.*

51. Fuller to Ward 11 Jan 1808, BMS MSS, H1/1.

52. Scott Waring to Hastings, 21 Dec 1807,  
BL Add MSS 29183, 80.

53. See report of the meeting in The Asiatic Annual Register, Vol IX, 29-31 and letter from Fuller to Ward, 11 Jan 1808, BMS MSS, H1/1.

54. H Pearson, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev Claudius Buchanan DD, 2 vols, Oxford, 1817, I, 197.

55. Toone to Hastings, 30 Jan 1808, BL Add MSS 29183,  
158.

56. Fuller to Marshman, 12 Feb 1808, BMS MSS, H1/1.

57. Fuller to Ward, 11 Jan 1808 and 12 Feb 1808, BMS MSS,  
H1/1.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE TROUBLED YEARS 1807-12

#### a. The Persian Pamphlet Controversy

The fears expressed by Grant and Parry that missionaries in India might be restricted further, did not take long to materialise. Lord Minto, the new governor-general, believed that a primary cause of the Vellore Mutiny had been the spreading of rumours that the British were trying to convert India.<sup>1</sup> By September 1807 he had come to the conclusion that "the only successful engine of sedition in any part of India must be that of persuading the people that our Government entertains hostile and systematic designs against their religion" and that therefore there was some danger from "the indiscretions and well-meaning but very mischievous zeal of the European missionaries."<sup>2</sup> This was the opening shot of a volley of accusations from Minto and others against the Baptists based in Serampore.

Minto had been precipitated into action by the complaints of a "Moghul merchant" that a pamphlet abusive of the prophet Muhammad had been printed by the Baptist press. On reading a translation of the pamphlet, Minto could only agree that it contained "the most direct and unqualified abuse of the principles and tenets of [Islam], and of its

founder." Minto felt that if his government did not take immediate action to repress the pamphlet, it "would be a departure from that principle of toleration which the Legislature had prescribed, which this Government had uniformly professed and observed, and to which its faith was solemnly pledged."<sup>3</sup>

Carey was ordered to explain the Baptist actions. His reaction to the complaint demonstrates that the distance between what the missionaries and the government considered acceptable was wide. Edmonstone, the chief secretary, had to point out to Carey the objectionable passages in the pamphlet in which Muhammad was called an idolator and Muslims were threatened with everlasting hell-fire if they did not recant their religion. Carey was conciliatory and immediately agreed to suppress the offending pamphlet and to submit all Baptist publications for government approval.<sup>4</sup> The affair did not, however, end there, for the Baptist press was in the Danish colony of Serampore and Minto also put considerable pressure on Krefting, the Danish governor, to ensure that the pamphlets were repressed.

Worse was to come after Minto received a report on the Baptist activities from Blaquiére, one of the Calcutta magistrates. Blaquiére had found eleven Baptist pamphlets which consisted of "strictures on the Hindu deities tending

to place them in a hateful or disgusting light" and "exhortations to embrace Christianity and translations of the psalms and Scriptures." He also found two pamphlets, addressed exclusively to Muslims, one of which was particularly abusive. It accused Muhammad of theft and plagiarism from other books, talked of his "absurdities and lies", and described him as a "tyrant", a "murderer" and as "lustful".

Blaquiere had also arranged for someone to be present at some of the Baptist preaching. The preacher was found telling his congregation that "even Brahmins and other respectable people live a sinful life with women of the town", that Brahmins drink and were "just as likely to sin as other men" and that Hindu "religious festivals were productive of sins". He also informed Blaquiere that there was not "one respectable character" amongst the congregation.<sup>s</sup> To add fuel to the fire, Sir George Barlow told Minto that he had received information that one of the Baptist missionaries [probably Ward] was "in the habit of preaching publicly in the streets of Calcutta in terms abusive of the Hindoo religion" and that "on several occasions the populace had manifested signs of irritation, and on one occasion had proceeded to acts of violence". Lord Minto decided that more stringent measures were necessary to curb the Baptist zeal and demanded the

removal of the Baptist press to Calcutta. Shortly afterwards all public preaching was prohibited.

In his secret despatch to the Court of Directors Minto set out the reasons for his fears. First of all, he pointed out that Britain was no longer a subordinate power and that, therefore, it was easy for Indians to think Britain was trying to make them all Christians by connecting in their minds the acts of English missionaries with acts of the British government. According to Minto, Indians considered the Serampore press in particular to be under the authority and protection of the Bengal government because it employed the Baptists to make and publish translations. Secondly, Minto argued that works in the vernacular "attract notice beyond the limits of their personal communication" and that Persian, the language of the objectionable pamphlet, was intelligible to very many people. Thirdly, he stressed the great danger from the 'bigotry' of the Muslims. Finally, he cited the Vellore Mutiny which had demonstrated to him that the sepoys could be irritated by attacks on their religious customs.<sup>6</sup> The emotional language that was used in discussing the perceived hazards indicates that Minto felt very strongly and genuinely that some of the Baptist activities posed a danger to the tranquillity of India. Perhaps he over-reacted. However, it was natural that Minto should take a cautious line. He

was a new governor-general with no previous Indian experience and had arrived in the wake of a bloody mutiny. In addition, he had no personal knowledge of the Baptist missionaries. The situation parallels the difficulties experienced by the Baptists on Wellesley's arrival in Bengal.

The missionaries believed that Minto was the "cats paw" of Edmonstone and others who had persuaded him to take a strong line against the missionaries.<sup>7</sup> Claudius Buchanan went so far as to imply this in an ill-judged letter and memorial to Minto.<sup>8</sup> Minto took grave exception to Buchanan's

disrespectful and unauthorized presumption that the Governor General, regardless of the first principle of his public duty, has blindly submitted to the guidance of the subordinate officers of Government and adopted measures of the highest importance, without a previous consideration of their origin and timing . . . .<sup>9</sup>

Minto admitted to his son that the paperwork was so voluminous that he had to place great reliance on the secretaries. His initial reaction to the missionaries' lack of prudence was no doubt affected by the views of his council. He thought highly of Sir George Barlow who had ordered the initial restrictions of missionary activity after Vellore and whose private misgivings were discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>10</sup> However, it should also be remembered that Barlow had been kind to the missionaries in



the past and could have acted much more stringently against them in the wake of the Vellore Mutiny. There is no evidence to suggest that Edmonstone and Lumsden were anti-missionary as such. Indeed, Edmonstone helped the Baptists on a number of occasions and contributed to the funds of the British and Foreign Bible Society.<sup>11</sup> The chief concern of these officials was for the political stability of India. Memories of the Vellore Mutiny were still fresh and disturbances in the south had continued until the end of 1806. As a Whig aristocrat, Minto would naturally have inclined to his council's view about the effects of 'over-enthusiasm' in his domains. In any case, it is clear from his correspondence that he took his duties very seriously and that he acted from his own conviction that missionary zeal was dangerous in the Indian situation.<sup>12</sup>

In November Minto received Parry's aggressive letter of June 1807 mentioned in the previous chapter.<sup>13</sup> Minto was very hurt by this letter and, while he was anxious to stress that he was "no enemy to the progress of Christianity in India", nor were other members of his government, he could not condone some of the Baptist activities and would ensure that they were regulated. He urged Parry to peruse their publications himself,

especially the miserable stuff addressed to the gentoos, in which without one word to convince, or to satisfy the mind of the heathen reader, without proof or argument of any kind the pages are filled with Hell fire, and Hell fire & still hotter fire, denounced against a whole race of men for believing

in the religion which they were taught by their fathers and mothers, and the truth of which is simply impossible that it should have entered into their imaginations to doubt. Is this the doctrine of our faith? . . . I am of the sect which believes that a just god will condemn no being without individual guilt . . . .

He went on to ask Parry if this was "a judicious course to pursue for the purpose of conversion", pointing out that in his opinion some of the Baptist tracts seemed "to aim principally at a general massacre of the Bramins by the populace of this country." Minto was particularly concerned at the demand for a total abolition of caste and referred to the Vellore Mutiny in which the simple proposal "to efface a mark of cast from the forehead of soldiers on parade, has had its share in a massacre of Christians." He feared that "your government" would next "be required to countenance public exhortations addressed to a gentoo nation, to efface, at once, not [merely] a little spot in yellow paste from the forehead, but the whole institution of cast itself, that is to say, the whole scheme of their civil polity as well as their fondest and most rooted religious tenets."

Minto agreed with Parry that "we shouldn't stop the propagation of Christianity for considerations of security" but he was "not equally ready to sacrifice the great interests which are confided to me, to a blind principle of complaisance towards every indiscretion and blunder which

the zeal or negligence (for the latter is fairly pleaded) of Mr Carey . . . ." Minto then went on to give his own opinion of how the missionaries should operate.

In my opinion the missionaries would advance better by mixing with the people, by habituating them individually to the more amiable points of their doctrine, and attracting them rather by its beneficent influences than by the mysteries and dogmas of faith. Let their minds be prepared by the former for the reception of the latter. I have some reason to think that the press and the pulpit have not work'd well . . . . Generally, those who have not been made angry have been made merry by both these engines of conversion. the Mahometan frowns, the Gentoo is apt to laugh . . . . the assertion that his religion is false is an absurd proposition to him.

The progress of Christianity in India, Minto believed, would necessarily be slow, "not carried by storm" but by "long, cautious, and pacific negotiation". As for the missionaries, he told Parry, "a little regulation was probably all that was needed".

Minto was very aggrieved that his motives had been misinterpreted by the Baptists, Buchanan and Parry. He observed that it was the way of those who are personally engaged in the work of conversion, "to confound any little check or correction of their own errors, with opposition or hostility to their purpose, & to call out atheism, deism, & above all persecution whenever a slip in their own conduct is required to be rectified."<sup>14</sup> This seems to have been a fair comment. Most of the time the Baptist and LMS letters spoke glowingly of the help given to them by

government. However, at the slightest restriction, they immediately accused officials of persecution, godlessness and trampling on the cross.

Without the aid of Governor Krefting, the Baptist press would probably have been forced to move to Calcutta or been dismantled. Krefting supported the missionaries, pointing out that their press was useful and that they were under the protection of the Danish king. This, together with Carey's profuse apologies for what had happened and his offer to submit all future publications for censorship, eventually led Minto to relent and the press remained in Serampore. Parry's and Buchanan's letters no doubt helped too by making Minto think twice before he placed further restrictions on missionary activity. The missionaries, for their part, were prepared to be conciliatory, not only because they feared being sent from the country but also because they believed their personal safety in India depended on the protection of government. Indeed, Marshman, in a letter to John Ryland in 1807 told him that "what keeps the missionary and his flock from being all cooly massacred" is the British government and that therefore a missionary who is not loyal to government is "dead to common prudence".<sup>15</sup>

In their memorial to Minto the missionaries therefore stressed that they were "perfectly unconscious of violating

any government orders." They then went on to explain the lack of danger to government in their work. The same men, who in their private correspondence feared massacre by the Indians, told Minto that "the natives like discussions and have sought instruction" and that "there had not been the "least appearance of dissatisfaction from listeners."<sup>16</sup> By their own admission, they told Minto "the truth but not the whole truth."<sup>17</sup>

By this time, Minto appears to have accepted that the Baptists were respectable and that their activities, when regulated, did not pose a danger to stability in India. The debt he owed to Parry, who had helped secure his appointment as governor-general, probably made him more sympathetic to the missionaries than he might otherwise have been.<sup>18</sup> In any event, he became quite friendly with them and was particularly impressed with Marshman's Chinese translations. Minto did not take any action against the Baptists when the British assumed control over Serampore in February 1808. By April 1808, Carey was writing to Fuller that he did not believe that Minto was "personally averse" to them and that the opposition they had met with "has arisen more from a political panick than from a wish to burden us in our undertaking."<sup>19</sup> This seems to have been true.

In practical terms, as with Barlow's restrictions after the Vellore Mutiny, Minto's restrictions appear to have affected the missionaries very little. The Baptists got round the prohibition on tracts by using excerpts from the Scriptures as pamphlets rather than their own compositions. They were confident that they would soon be able to preach in Calcutta again. They ignored the general regulation prohibiting missionaries from settling up-country.<sup>20</sup> Long before the Board's reply to his despatch was received in India, Lord Minto had freed the missionaries from most of the restraints he had imposed on them. In 1810 he also informally allowed them to expand the number of their missionary stations.<sup>21</sup>

Once again, the furore over missionary activity was greater in Britain than in India. The Persian pamphlet was not the first publication to have caused concern at home. A tract written by Ram Basu, one of the Baptist converts, had been translated and sent to England just after the Vellore Mutiny and Fuller had had to smoothe away objections.<sup>22</sup> However, far more objections had been aroused against Claudius Buchanan's Memoir on the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, with its intimations that the Hindus should be converted forcibly.<sup>23</sup> Ironically, just as Minto was dealing with the problem of the Persian pamphlet, Robert Dundas, with Buchanan's Memoir in mind, was writing a secret letter to Sir George Barlow

stating that he would not hesitate to expel "the authors or editors of any publications, that could justly and unequivocally be considered as offensive to the natives, & tending to excite their religious fears and jealousies to an extent that would naturally indispose them towards our Government."<sup>24</sup> Such sentiments, expressed by both the governor-general in India and the president of the Board of Control in England, did not bode well for the missionaries. Because of the time lapse in communications between England and India, Minto had eased restrictions on the missionaries long before the directors had received Minto's November despatch about the Baptist publications. This despatch had a 'sting in the tail', about which the Baptists were unaware, because in it Minto suggested that measures should be adopted which would discourage "any accession to the number of missionaries actually employed under the protection of the British Government in India" and requested instructions for the future policy to be adopted towards the missionaries.<sup>25</sup>

Grant found his self-imposed role as defender of the missionaries in India particularly difficult this time. Not only was the 'pamphlet war' against missionary activity in India in full swing, but also Grant could not in honesty justify the Baptist publications. After having seen English translations of most of the tracts, he told Fuller:

If those translations are just, the good men have been wanting in prudence & circumspection. They have given too much occasion to those who seek occasion, and have been the means of great trouble and mortification to those circumstanced as I am, who have a difficult battle to fight when standing on the best ground, but are sadly weakened and hampered when the ground will not support them  
 . . . . .<sup>26</sup>

Once again, the powerful position of the Chairs is illustrated by the way in which Grant and Parry were able to minimise the damage. They were even more successful in keeping the matter away from public discussion than they had been the year before in the aftermath of Vellore and the subject was never discussed outside a secret Court of Directors. Indeed, such was their determination to keep the whole matter secret that Dundas later informed Minto that "the Chairs would not agree to send an answer to the letter [the Bengal secret despatch of 2 Nov 1807] until an official requisition to do so was made under the 15th section of the Act 1793."<sup>27</sup>

The discussion in the Court by all accounts was "very unpleasant" and "warm"<sup>28</sup> and Grant and Parry found it extremely difficult to "get the Court and the Board of Control to agree to any answer framed on what we think proper principles."<sup>29</sup> By this they meant that the despatch should admit Britain's duty to propagate Christianity. Warren Hastings was one of those working behind the scenes to convince the Court of the dangers of all missionary



activity. He was totally against Buchanan's proposals and maintained that the "process of missionary warfare, however, modified, can never derive its sanction from the Gospel of peace."<sup>30</sup>

All too well aware of the opposition building up against them, in July, the Chairs sent Dundas a draft despatch for his approval, once again threatening him that the religious public would oppose any renewal of the Company's charter if the interests of Christianity were not looked after.<sup>31</sup> They found that Dundas "greatly disagree[d]" with their proposed despatch and wished to consult the Cabinet. Grant then brought William Wilberforce into play and asked him to use his influence with Spencer Perceval, Chancellor of the Exchequer and therefore a member of the Board of Control. Grant wanted to ensure that Perceval should "rightly understand all the bearings of [the question]".<sup>32</sup> Dundas himself put forward a draft despatch to which Grant and Parry were unable to get any alteration.<sup>33</sup> Later Dundas informed Minto that the Chairs were left "in a very small minority, not more than one or two besides themselves."<sup>34</sup> The only success for the Evangelicals was an amendment included after Perceval's personal intervention. This amendment altered a passage reading "We are far from being averse to the introduction of Christianity . . . ." to "We are anxious it should be distinctly understood that we are far from being averse . . . ."<sup>35</sup>

Although Grant and Parry felt the final despatch was "very far from being such as was proposed", Grant nevertheless acknowledged to Udny that it was "better than the majority of the Court would have dictated, and it is so from the interference of the Board of Control". Dundas' draft therefore seems to have been more temperate than the directors would have produced. Grant told Udny that another reason for their acquiescence in the final despatch was fears that ". . . otherwise the dispute might have remained open, and worse ensued; for the truth is, the publications of the missionaries - some of them at least are quite indefensible and discreditable, and, if the subject had come into open discussion in this country, would have brought reproach on the whole of their undertaking and its abettors . . . ." <sup>36</sup> Grant and Parry were confirmed in this view by the arrival of Minto's secret despatch on Buchanan's excesses just as the Court was debating how to deal with the missionaries. Grant and Parry decided it would be prudent to sign the despatch and contented themselves with expressing their misgivings in a secret Minute. Similarly, three directors who felt that the despatch did not go far enough in restraining the Baptists, minuted their protests. <sup>37</sup>

The general view has been that the Court's reply to Minto's despatch was another victory for the missionary cause. Indeed, the Baptists themselves thought this and Fuller

told Ward that, "through the influence of our friends", this amounted to "such a cold approbation as nearly amounted to a censure of his conduct . . . ."38 Keeping the question out of the public arena when misgivings about missionary activity in India were being expressed so vehemently was no mean feat. However, a closer examination of the wording of the despatch, together with two private letters written by Dundas to Minto, suggests that Grant's and Parry's misgivings were nearer the mark. As they pointed out in their secret Minute, the despatch, even with Perceval's amendment, was far from the "distinct and full recognition" of the principle that the nation and the East India Company should promote the "prudent and safe exertion of individuals of proper character for the diffusion of the knowledge of Christianity in India." Nor did the despatch in their view guard against the possibility of the Bengal government being able to crush the labours of missionaries. They feared that if a few 'natives' "should . . . pretend alarm for their religion, those passages [in the despatch] might afford a sufficient pretext to the Government to suppress all missionary exertions . . . ."39

It is also difficult to see the despatch as a "cold approbation" of Minto's actions. The only real censure was of Minto carrying out his measures in public instead of dealing privately with the missionaries. Accordingly, Minto was enjoined to abstain from "all ostentatious

interference" with them. The Court added a warning that he should not prevent the missionaries from preaching to Indian Christians. Otherwise the despatch "entirely" approved of his efforts to interrupt the circulation of the pamphlets. In answer to Minto's suggestion that there should be no further "accession to the numbers of missionaries employed under the protection of government", the Court simply pointed out that none of the missionaries in Bengal were there with the Company's licence. Furthermore, while the Court was "well aware" that the work of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries had not heretofore been "attended with injurious consequences", in its view, this was because their numbers were not "sufficient to excite alarm" and because their conduct had been generally "prudent and conciliatory". The despatch also agreed with Minto's point that Britain's new paramountcy over India made it even more imperative that government should protect Indians from "premature and over-zealous attempts to convert them to Christianity." Finally, in answer to Minto's request for further instructions on the policy to be adopted towards the missionaries, the Court referred him to their despatch of 29 May 1807, produced after the Vellore Mutiny, in which the Court stated that it was "far from being in our contemplation to add the influence of our authority" to missionary activity. While the Court was prepared to admit as a principle the desirability of imparting Christianity

to India, it stipulated that the means to be used were to be "only such as shall be free from political danger or alarm." As in 1807, the Court left this to the discretion of the government on the spot: that is, to Lord Minto and his council.<sup>40</sup>

The strength of Minto's hand was confirmed by two private letters from Robert Dundas, about which Grant and Parry were ignorant. In April 1808 Dundas wrote a long letter to Minto discussing the Company's affairs and the implications of the impending renewal of the charter. He listed the Board's eight priorities, the second of which was a strong determination to "adopt the most effectual measures for enforcing the laws against unlicensed persons landing or settling in India, and particularly against their traversing the country." As far as the missionaries were concerned, Dundas informed Minto that the British occupation of Serampore "will have left you at full liberty to enforce any regulations you may think expedient". Dundas thought that the course Minto had taken was "most proper and judicious". Furthermore, Dundas had "no doubt in thinking that, next to restraining the missionaries from any acts which may be dangerous to the public tranquillity, it is most desirable that the Government should not appear to be a party in any of their proceedings, even of the most inoffensive description."<sup>41</sup> As it happened, Minto had not deemed it necessary to take any further action against the

Baptists when Serampore was taken over in February 1808. In December 1808, Dundas reiterated his "entire concurrence in the principles upon which the Bengal government appear to have acted" towards the Baptists.<sup>42</sup>

b. Missionaries and The Company 1807-12

The missionaries believed that the Court's despatch and its censure of Minto's public proceedings with them would herald a new era in relations between the missionaries and both the Bengal government and the Company administration at home. Confidence returned to such an extent that the LMS asked Lord Gambier to try to secure a passage for two missionaries by frigate. The Admiralty, however, was not willing to make such a decision without first consulting the Board of Control. The Board of Control in turn "judged it expedient in consequence of the prejudices which have arisen against any attempt being made for the conversion of the Hindoos to the Christian faith", to refer the matter to the Court of Directors.

Despite the fact that Parry and Grant were the Chairs at this time, the Court of Directors objected to the proposal and the Admiralty therefore could not help. The Admiralty official, the Evangelical John Dyer, regretted that, "however well the Government may be disposed to aid the efforts of the Society, yet I much fear that political

considerations when governed by worldly policy will always interpose insuperable objections to any formal sanction to their exertions". Nevertheless, all was not lost, for Dyer went on to say that "if the Society can introduce their missionaries into foreign settlements without any appeal to the executive government, I think they are not likely to experience any interruption to their exertions, but would be permitted to carry forward their objective without molestation."<sup>43</sup> Dyer seems to have received some sort of informal assurance that this would be the case.

This proved to be so. The two missionaries in question, Lee and Gordon, on arrival in India, were permitted to reside at Vizagapatam, as was Hands at Bellary "in the capacity of Protestant missionaries".<sup>44</sup> Vizagapatam was the largest district in the Madras presidency and a factory had existed there from the mid-seventeenth century. It was formally ceded to the British in 1765. The length of time Vizagapatam had been in British hands made it an obvious choice for the first LMS missionary station. The choice of Bellary is particularly interesting because, according to Gordon and Lee, it had been in part suggested by Sir George Barlow himself, who, together with the Rev M Thompson, chief chaplain at Madras, had obtained the necessary government permission for it.<sup>45</sup> Bellary had been ceded to the British in 1801 by the Nizam of Hyderabad and had been peaceful since the early suppression of the

poligars. A Goan Catholic missionary had been in the area from 1775. Thompson was a particular friend to the LMS missionaries. According to them, Thompson spoke "repeatedly" to the governor and governor-general "on the importance of missions", and received "very favourable intimations as to the sanction of Govt while missionaries act with prudence and discretion." Thompson was also prepared to take responsibility for the missionaries' "prudential conduct".<sup>46</sup>

The London Missionary Society received other signs of goodwill from the Madras government at this time. Permission was granted for the construction of a "missionary chapel" at Blacktown.<sup>47</sup> However, the missionaries were not permitted to proceed precisely as they wished. Hands had in fact wished to go to Seringapatam rather than Bellary. Sir George Barlow told Thompson that this could not possibly be granted and that "while affairs continued in the present state, no missionaries could be permitted on any account to enter the Mysore country."<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Dr Taylor, the LMS missionary in the Bombay presidency, felt that public sentiment against missionaries was such that he could not go into Gujerat or into the Maratha country. He believed that he would be ordered out of the country directly he moved out of Bombay itself.<sup>49</sup> One of the missionaries gave the reasons for these restrictions as the areas being "too



far from the seat of Government or inhabited by a people whose affection for British dominion are scarcely conciliated and to whom they fear giving any cause of offence, to which [the government] think our endeavours might have a tendency."<sup>50</sup> Taylor, the LMS missionary in Bombay, told his directors that Surat had been prohibited because of the "very turbulent spirit" exercised by the "fierce and bigoted Musselmen" there. <sup>51</sup> Despite these two embargoes, the LMS felt well-treated by government officials and, in September 1810, Loveless wrote to his directors:

We have not been in the least hindered in our work from any external causes . . . . Indeed there appears no hindrance whatever in the way of prudent discreet Missionary exertions, except the want of labourers to carry them on . . . .<sup>52</sup>

In 1810, two Baptist missionaries were refused permission to go to a frontier station near the Punjab because "the unsettled state of the country made it unsafe to permit any Europeans to go there". Minto, however, privately told Marshman that the missionaries could go to Agra instead.<sup>53</sup> While the LMS missionaries understood the Company's apprehensions over missionaries working in frontier areas and felt they were fairly treated by officials, the Baptists were not so grateful. William Ward's response to Lord Minto's concession was: "Now we are likely to get stations fixed with the public permission of Government &

we (like toads) shall be tolerated, & not hunted down like wild beasts."<sup>54</sup>

It should be stressed that the regulation excluding the missionaries from the frontiers applied equally to all Europeans not in the Company's service and, as far as the Baptists were concerned, the Company had some grounds for apprehension. The LMS missionaries believed that the Baptists experienced trouble because they had been over-zealous, as did David Brown.<sup>55</sup> John Chamberlain was a Baptist missionary whose 'enthusiasm' for the cause resulted in trouble time and again. In 1808 he had an altercation with the Anglican chaplain and the commanding officer at Berhampore over the question of baptism. In 1810 relations had deteriorated to the extent that the commanding officer sent a complaint to Calcutta about Chamberlain's conduct. Joshua Marshman obtained permission for Chamberlain and Peacock, another missionary, to go to Agra. Contrary to a private assurance given to Lord Minto by Marshman, Chamberlain caused trouble again and it was alleged that he indulged in "declamatory harangues and challenges", "publicly reviling the Koraun and shasters" and distributed tracts "obnoxious to the religion of the country".<sup>56</sup> The Bengal government, on being informed, considered this behaviour a danger to tranquillity and, while not ordering Chamberlain and Peacock back to Calcutta, refused a Baptist request to send

missionaries to other parts of India. Chamberlain then bickered with the military commander at Agra and was arrested and sent back to Calcutta. Peacock, on the other hand, was allowed to remain.<sup>57</sup> The Bengal government seems to have displayed considerable tolerance towards Chamberlain's behaviour when it is remembered that he could have been expelled from the country altogether. It was not to be the end of trouble involving him.

From about 1810, relations between the missionaries and Company officials in India appear to have deteriorated. One of the first signs of this was a nervous attitude towards the circulation of the Scriptures. In 1811 Brown and Thomason asked the Baptists not to attend a committee meeting of the Auxiliary Bible Society in Calcutta "lest being missionaries we should alarm the public." The same year, a public subscription for the British and Foreign Bible Society was not allowed in Madras.<sup>58</sup> In 1812 Barlow "declined all interference" in the promulgation of a Malayalam New Testament in the presidency, from "the apprehension that it would be liable to the same dangerous misconception of which the suspicions of similar interference had in recent instances given rise."<sup>59</sup> In 1812 nine missionaries arrived in India without licences in the space of one month. Edmonstone, permitted Johns and Lawson, two Baptist missionaries to stay "until the pleasure of the Court of Directors" was known.<sup>60</sup>

Pritchett, an LMS missionary arriving from China, was subjected to a very strict examination on arrival at Calcutta by the police, who told him that it was because of some "informality or artifice on the part of a missionary who sailed from Calcutta to Vizagapatam." This had led to a complaint from the Madras government to Bengal for giving the missionary the opportunity to do this.<sup>61</sup> Pritchett was ordered to leave India because he did not possess a licence but managed to reach Vizagapatam by subterfuge. No further proceedings seem to have been taken against him.

Robert May, the LMS missionary who arrived with Johns and Lawson in 1812, was also ordered home. The Bengal government relented after the British resident, the Company chaplain and the inhabitants of Chinsurah had made representations to allow May to stay.<sup>62</sup> May thought he was eventually permitted to remain because of his work with schools and because he was replacing Nathaniel Forsyth, who wanted to go home and was not, therefore, adding to the overall numbers of missionaries. Thompson, the next LMS missionary to arrive in Madras was not so fortunate. He arrived at the end of 1812 and applied to Sir George Barlow for permission to stay. He was told by Barlow that, as a recent order had been received from the Supreme Government forbidding settlement in the presidency without permission, he could do nothing. Thompson then applied to Sir Samuel Auchmuty, an Evangelical on the Madras council, for help,

who similarly replied that "I am sorry to say that an intimation has been received from the Supreme Govt that you are arrived in India without permission & will not be allowed to remain in it . . . . I have only to regret that with such high authority, it is out of my power to contend."<sup>3</sup>

The situation deteriorated still further when five American missionaries arriving without licences were also ordered to leave. Finally, Johns and Lawson, the two Baptist missionaries allowed to stay pending the Court's approval, were peremptorily ordered to leave the country.

Ironically, this was just as the parliamentary campaign to facilitate missionary activity in India was starting.

These expulsions seem harsh and unnecessary as none of the persons expelled had caused any trouble in India. It also contrasts with the routine permission given in March 1813 for Jacobi, an SPCK missionary, to proceed to India. The government's attitude towards the American missionaries was, however, understandable. Britain was at war with America and five was a relatively large number of foreign missionaries to arrive at once. In addition, they were undiplomatic, "trifling with Government by making repeated applications to go to different places, but remaining still in Calcutta."<sup>4</sup> The attitude towards Lawson, Johns and Thompson is less explicable. The missionaries believed

that Minto left most decisions to the discretion of his council and that the hostility of Ricketts, secretary to the Bengal council and Syms, the chief of police, therefore had no check.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, an official appeal sent to Minto asking him to rescind the expulsion orders was refused. Even George Udny, who had been such a good friend to missionary activity, when approached earlier by Marmaduke Thompson on behalf of Pritchett for advice would not commit himself, replying that "although people sail without papers, . . . they are not supposed to and it can cause inconvenience and trouble to the captains".<sup>66</sup>

It is difficult to assess the reasons for this hardening of attitude. Carey spoke to Colebrooke on the Bengal Council about it and came to the conclusion that there was no specific dislike of missionaries.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the Court of Directors was putting considerable pressure on its Indian governments to be cautious in its attitude to religious matters. Apart from the despatches already discussed, the Court in 1809 told Madras that while it was impressed with the Rev Dr Kerr's report on the state of Christianity in the south, it did not "concur with every opinion and suggestion" expressed. The Court was of the opinion that it would be "highly injudicious and improper" for any of Kerr's suggested regulations to apply to the native inhabitants and reminded the Madras government of the importance of persuading the

'natives' "that the British government has no intention of molesting them in the exercise of their religious worship or opinions". The Court of Directors believed this was particularly important "at this time to the tranquillity of our Eastern dominions".<sup>68</sup> Another important factor was the impending renewal of the Company's charter. The Company was fearful of losing its monopoly and with it the right to determine who should enter India. Company officials, including Charles Grant, had long maintained that allowing free access to Europeans, missionary or otherwise, would "open the floodgates to adventurers of all kinds who would lower Britons in the eyes of Indians and might even subvert them with democratic principles". Dundas' private letter to Minto, discussed on page 176 above, made it quite clear that the laws against unlicensed persons were to be enforced.<sup>69</sup> This letter would have been received by Minto towards the end of 1808. The point was not put to the test as far as missionaries were concerned until the new arrivals in 1812. Minto's apprehensions on any increase to the numbers of missionaries had been made clear in his November 1807 despatch to the Court of Directors.

It has to be said that the missionaries themselves did not help their cause. The Americans' imprudence has already been mentioned. The Baptists also mishandled the situation. Joshua Marshman, who acted for the Baptists,

was not straightforward in his answers to government. Fuller, the Baptist secretary, was in "no doubt that the orders for the return of the bretheren were the consequence of that correspondence", which "must have given great offence to Government."<sup>70</sup> The permission given to the LMS missionary, May, to remain in India indicates that there might well be something in this.

c. Church/Dissent Rivalry

Company 'bureaucrats' and 'old India- hands', however, did not pose the only problems for Dissenting missionaries in India in the years 1807-12. Company chaplains also made trouble for them from time to time. Denominational cooperation and rivalry coexisted in India just as much as it did in England. Work amongst the European soldiers was fertile ground for tension between Church of England Company chaplains and Dissenting missionaries. Such tension directly contributed to the expulsion of John Chamberlain from Berhampore, where he had baptised fifty-three European soldiers and got into heated arguments with the chaplain and commanding officer about baptism. Parsons, the Company chaplain, took a dim view of Chamberlain's encroachment on his territory. Chamberlain's hot temper did him no good and Fuller was too late with his warning that Chamberlain's actions would "prepare the way for jealousy and contention between



himself and Mr Parsons."<sup>71</sup> In Calcutta itself the Baptists were several times forbidden from preaching in the fort. In addition, Buchanan's successor issued a public notice asking the public not to support the free school the Baptists were proposing to set up [the Benevolent Institution] because it was to be conducted by Dissenters and this was "improper interference with the education of the parochial poor".<sup>72</sup> The LMS missionaries in the south occasionally experienced similar problems.

While the Evangelical chaplains such as Brown, Buchanan, Kerr, Vaughan and Thompson did much to smooth the path to respectability and acceptance for the Dissenting missionaries, there is no doubt that they felt superior to their less well-educated brothers-in-Christ. They also felt the necessity to further the interests of the Established Church and earn the approbation of the Company and their own ecclesiastical authorities. This manifested itself in attempts to control the Dissenting missionaries and their translations. The university-educated chaplains did not think much of the Baptist translations. Henry Martyn, for instance, wrote that Marshman's translations "ought to be done with more care. Many important sentences are wholly lost, from faults in the order and other small mistakes. The errors of the press are also very considerable."<sup>73</sup> The Persian pamphlet affair itself did not help relations with David Brown, who told two of the LMS

missionaries that the Baptists were "somewhat at fault" and contrasted the "Christian temper and deportment and freedom from narrow prejudices" of the LMS missionaries, which has "won you many friends" with the "imprudence of my neighbours."<sup>74</sup>

The Evangelical Company chaplains also put forward proposals for an increased ecclesiastical establishment in India. This was motivated by a genuine belief that the ecclesiastical establishment was woefully inadequate and a greater presence of the Established Church would benefit both Europeans and Indians. It was also motivated by a desire to gain acceptance with the higher ranks of the Church which, in turn, would lead the episcopacy to support Evangelical missionary schemes. The Dissenting missionaries were extremely mistrustful of these schemes, which they feared would jeopardize their own position in India. One reaction to Kerr's 1805 proposal for an increased Anglican establishment was that it "would make rich splendid livings and sinecures". The writer regarded the Church of England as a "bigoted and intolerant church" who hated "interlopers and would rather see their flock untended", than cared for by Dissenters.<sup>75</sup> The fears of the Dissenters were not without foundation. In 1804, the Bishop of Meath had written to Lord William Bentinck, governor of Madras, that he was astonished that nothing was being done for Christianity in India and that

the attempt was being left to "fanatics, who disgrace it."<sup>76</sup> The following year Kerr and Buchanan both proposed an increased Anglican ecclesiastical establishment as the best means for converting India to Christianity.

In 1808 Buchanan made far more explicit moves towards controlling the Baptist translations. First of all, he proposed the setting up of a 'college for translations', to be superintended by the Church of England and to be called 'British Propaganda'. The most iniquitous aspect of the proposal, as far as the Baptists were concerned, was the suggestion that the property of the Baptist mission should be alienated to the new institution. On failing to get Baptist agreement to this scheme, Buchanan suggested the formation of a 'Christian Institution in the East' to aid the British and Foreign Bible Society. Their joint participation with the Baptists as a corresponding committee of the B&FBS gave the Company chaplains an opening to control the Baptist translations. The Bible Society in 1807 had granted the Baptists a monthly allowance of 300 rupees for their translations and a committee of three Baptists and three Church Evangelicals was set up in Calcutta to decide how this money and any other funds collected should be spent. Buchanan tried to ease the Baptists off the corresponding committee and the Church Evangelicals assumed the sole right of disposal of the funds already collected for their translations.

Buchanan also took it upon himself to cease the payment of the 300 rupee allowance to the Baptists. In addition, he engaged Martyn to do Persian translations and, according to the Baptists, enticed away their Persian translator, Sabat, with an offer of a salary of 200 rupees a month, compared to the 50 rupees paid by the Baptists.<sup>77</sup> By denigrating the Baptist translations and maintaining that they would be much better done by men of the calibre of Henry Martyn, and by assuming control of funds, Brown and Buchanan hoped that the Company chaplains rather than the Dissenting missionaries would get the credit for future translations.

Fuller remonstrated with David Brown and complained officially to the B&FBS. Brown replied that he did not see how the Baptists could remain members of the corresponding committee of the Bible Society and receive supplies if they refused to submit their translations for approval by the Evangelical members of the committee. This row rumbled on for several years and in 1811, Marshman told Fuller that "Brown is still up to his tricks" because the Baptists were not getting information on Bible Society meetings and reports. Brown also tried, once again unsuccessfully, to get the Baptists to withdraw from the corresponding committee "for the public good" as many "carnal men" would not contribute to the Bible Society because Dissenters were on the committee.<sup>78</sup>

The trouble experienced by the missionaries in India in the years 1807-12 provides part of the background for the parliamentary struggle to force the East India Company to do more for Christianity in India. The struggle of Dissenters for respectability and religious freedom in Britain provides the other part. The way they had been treated by Churchmen, even Evangelical Churchmen, both at home and in India convinced them that they would have no real security in India unless provision for their work was explicitly made in the Company's charter, which fortuitously was due for renewal in 1813. It was also a matter of general principle for Dissenters, who were having difficulties in other parts of the British empire as well. The aim of the Dissenters therefore was to persuade the Legislature to "expunge that clause [about licences], or so to modify it that Ministers of the Gospel may have leave to preach, form or visit Churches, and perform the various duties of their office without molestation, and that they may have a right to settle in and travel over any part of India for that purpose . . . ."79 In other words, they wanted complete freedom of action in India.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Minto to Tierney, 30 June 1807, NLS MSS 11282, 154 et seq.
2. Minto to Parry, Sep 1807, NLS MSS 11283, 158 et seq.
3. Bengal Secret letter to Court of Directors, 2 Nov 1807, paras 1 and 4, IOR L/PS/5/31.
4. A record of Edmonstone's interview with Carey and other relevant correspondence can be found in IOR Home Misc 690, 9 et seq.
5. A copy of Blaquiére's memo of 6 Sep 1807 can be found in NLS MSS 11366, 43-4.
6. Bengal Secret letter to Court of Directors, 2 Nov 1807, IOR L/PS/5/31.
7. Carey to Fuller, 14 Oct 1807, BMS MSS, IN/13.
8. Covering letter and memorial 9 and 7 Nov 1807 can be found in IOR Home Misc 690, 207-243.
9. Bengal Secret letter to Court of Directors, 7 Dec 1807, contained in PP (East Indies), VIII (1812-13), 74-79.
10. 15 Sep 1807, NLS MSS 11740, 3.
11. Carey to Ryland 27 April 1808, NRO CSBC MSS.
12. See, for instance, his letter to Lord Grenville, 15 Sep 1807, NLS MSS 11283, 28-9.
13. See above, 134.
14. Minto to Parry, 2 Dec 1807, NLS MSS 11339, 53 et seq.
15. Marshman to Ryland, 1807, BMS MSS, IN/19A.
16. The memorial can be found in NLS MSS 11366, 81 et seq.
17. Marshman to Ryland, 17 Nov 1807, BMS MSS, IN19/A.
18. Parry to Minto, 9 June 1808, NLS MSS 11338, 70.
19. Carey to Fuller, 20 April 1808, BMS MSS, IN/13.
20. Carey to Ryland, 22 Jan 1808, NRO, CSBC MSS.
21. Marshman to Ryland, 7 Nov 1810, BMS MSS, IN/19A.

22. Fuller to Marshman, 12 Feb 1808, BMS MSS, H1/2.
23. London, 1805, 31.
24. 11 Dec 1807, NLS MSS 1063, 199 et seq.
25. 2 Nov 1807, IOR L/PS/5/31, para 50.
26. See letter Fuller to Ward, 27 Aug 1808, BMS MSS H1.
27. 27 Dec 1808, NLS MSS 11302, 99-100 .
28. Parry to Minto, 9 Jun 1808, NLS MSS 11338, 70, and Dundas to Minto, NLS MSS 11302, 27 Dec 1808, 99-100.
29. Letter from Grant to Wilberforce, 16 July 1808, The Correspondence of William Wilberforce, ed RI & S Wilberforce, 2 vols, London 1840, II, 132.
30. 'A Plan of Constitutional Regulations for the Administration of the British Dominion in India', nd, NLS MSS 39892, 34 et seq.
31. 9 July 1808, Bodleian MSS, Eng.hist.C.210.
32. Grant to Wilberforce, 16 Aug 1808, in R I & S Wilberforce, Correspondence, II, 132-3.
33. R Dundas to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, 10 Aug 1808, NLS MSS 11302, 100. See also notes on Secret Court of Directors 21 Jul 1808, Bodleian MSS, Eng.hist.C.210, and letter from Grant to Wilberforce, 30 Aug 1808, RI & S Wilberforce, Correspondence, II, 139.
34. 27 Dec 1808, NLS MSS 11302, 99-100.
35. Grant to Wilberforce, 30 Aug 1808, cited in R I & S Wilberforce, Correspondence, II, 139.
36. Grant to Udny 15 Sep 1808, cited in H Morris, Life of Charles Grant, London, 1904, 303-4.
37. For the draft despatch, amendments and protests see Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, 16 Aug 1808, IOR, L/PS/1/10, np.
38. Fuller to Ward, 6 Feb 1809, BMS MSS, H1/1.
39. IOR L/PS/1/10, np.
40. Public letter to Bengal, 7 Sep 1808, IOR E/4/663, and Public letter to Madras, 29 May 1807, para 18, IOR E/4/900.

41. 30 April 1808, NLS MSS 11302, 32-33.
42. 27 Dec 1808, NLS MSS 11302, 99-100.
43. J Dyer to LMS, 10 Jan 1809, LMS MSS, HO(I) 2/4/B.
44. Madras Public letter, 15 March 1811, para 290, E/4/340.
45. Gordon and Lee to LMS 23 Oct 1811, LMS MSS, SI(Gen) 1/3/C.
46. Letter from Hands, 4 April 1810, cited in Desgranges' Journal, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
47. Madras Public letter, 15 March 1811, para 293, IOR E/4/340.
48. Letter from Hands, 4 April 1810, cited in Desgranges' Journal, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
49. Taylor to the LMS, 14 April 1810, LMS MSS, SI(Gen) 1/2/B.
50. Pritchett's Journal, 24 Aug 1811, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
51. Extract of letters from Taylor Dec 1806, cited in Transactions of the Missionary Society, III (1813), 82.
52. Extract of letter from Loveless, 10 Sep 1810, cited in Transactions of the Missionary Society, III (1813), 365.
53. Marshman to Ryland, 7 Nov 1810, BMS MSS IN/19A.
54. Ward to Fuller, 21 Oct 1810, BMS MSS IN/17.
55. Taylor to the LMS, 14 Jan 1809, LMS MSS, SI(Gen) 1/1/C.
56. Edmonstone to Marshman, 13 Sep 1811, BMS MSS, IN/19A.
57. Marshman to Peacock, 25 July 1812, BMS MSS, IN/19.
58. Ward's Journal, 10 June 1811, BMS MSS.
59. Madras Public letter, 10 Jan 1812, paras 249-50, IOR E/4/341.
60. Edmonstone to Marshman, 23 June 1812, BMS MSS, IN/21.
61. Pritchett's Journal, 28 Feb 1811, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1. Gordon went 'by stealth'.
62. May to LMS, 21 Nov 1812, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/1/B.



63. J Thompson's Journal, 9 May 1812, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
64. Joint Journal of Gordon and Pritchett, Jan 1813, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
65. Hands' Journal, 21 Feb 1810, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
66. Pritchett's Journal, 21 Sep 1811, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 1.
67. Carey to Ryland, 14 April 1813, BMS MSS, IN/14.
68. Public letter to Madras, 11 Jan 1809, paras 83-4, IOR E/4/902.
69. 30 April 1808, NLS MSS 1063, 20 et seq.
70. Fuller to Carey, Marshman and Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H1/bound volume 2.
71. Copy letter, Fuller to Chamberlain, 18 May 1809, AL MSS.
72. Marshman to Ryland, 24 Feb 1811, BMS MSS, IN/19
73. Journals and Letters of Henry Martyn BD, ed S Wilberforce, 2 Vols, London, 1837, II, 79.
74. Desgranges' Journal, 25 Sep 1808, LMS MSS SIJ, Box 1.
75. Unsigned, undated letter in BMS MSS, IN/13.
76. 28 May 1804, Portland MSS, PwJb.114.
77. Carey to Fuller, 20 April 1808, BMS MSS, IN/13.
78. Marshman to Fuller 2 Jan 1811 and Marshman to Ryland, 24 Feb 1811, BMS MSS, IN/19A .
79. Carey to Ryland, 14 April 1813, BMS MSS, IN/14.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE 1813 RENEWAL OF THE COMPANY'S CHARTER

We are sitting here like Officers on the Home Staff receiving and giving dinner amongst Christian Lords and Baronets and MPs talking around one table of the progress of Bible societies and foreign missions . . . . (Henry Thornton)<sup>1</sup>

#### a. The Ground Laid

On 15 February 1812 William Wilberforce, echoing words he had written to Lord Wellesley in 1806, wrote to Joseph Hardcastle of the LMS that he

had long been looking forward to the period of the renewal of the East India Company's charter, as to a great era when I hoped that it would please God to enable the friends of Christianity to be the instruments of wiping away what I have long thought, next to the slave trade, the foulest blot on the moral character of our country . . . the suffering of our fellow subjects . . . . in the East Indies, to remain, without any effort on our part to enlighten them, under the grossest, the darkest and most depraving system of idolatrous superstition that almost ever existed upon earth.<sup>2</sup>

The events of the years 1807-12 had all too clearly demonstrated to the missionary lobby that the East India Company would have to be forced to do its moral and religious duty towards India by legislative action, as had the West India interest during the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade. By 1812, far from the situation improving, it seemed to be getting worse. The

arbitrary expulsion orders of the Bengal government made it seem as if the presence of missionaries in India was no longer to be connived at by the local authorities. The missionaries in India had been pleading for public action ever since restrictions had been placed on their movements after the Vellore Mutiny. Even Grant and Parry, directors of the Company, had felt it necessary to warn the Court of Directors and the Board of Control that the 'religious public' would rise against the continuance of the Company's monopoly in India if restrictions on missionary activity continued. With the Company's charter due for renewal, both the missionaries in India and their friends at home believed the time for legislative action had come.

The tactics of the campaign were master-minded by William Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect [also known as the 'Saints'] but the role of the Dissenters, particularly the Baptists, should not be overlooked.<sup>3</sup> So many people and organisations were involved that it provides an impressive indication of the strength of feeling that could be aroused over religious issues in Britain in the early years of the nineteenth century. The Baptists and the Missionary Society, whose missionaries were labouring in India, naturally formed the mainstay of the public campaign. The SPCK was ambiguous in its support. Members of the CMS and Wesleyan Methodists were very active in lobbying Parliament and mobilising public support. What is less well-known

is the significant involvement of Scotland, both of its established church and of Scottish Dissenters. The Protestant Dissenting Deputies and the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty [PSPRL], which had been so energetic in the 1811 campaign against Lord Sidmouth's proposed bill to tighten up the Toleration Acts, were also deeply involved, as they regarded the missionary campaign as part of their battle for religious toleration.

These disparate religious groups all professed the belief that Christianity should be brought, without coercion, to the 'natives' of India as well as to the Europeans.

However, each group had its particular aims besides. The CMS and SPCK wanted to see the Church of England actively involved in missionary work and felt that a full ecclesiastical establishment should be set up in India.

The Church of Scotland, as the other established church of the United Kingdom, felt that it too should have an ecclesiastical establishment in India, particularly as so many of the Company's servants were Scots. The Dissenting Deputies wanted to see the legal entry of all Protestant sects and denominations to India but felt there should still be some control over their activities. Finally, the LMS, Baptists, Wesleyans, Scottish Dissenters and the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty wanted to see the ending of all restrictions on missionary activity and complete freedom of worship for their church

members in India. The struggle was not only over whether or not the East India Company had the right to determine when and how Christianity should be propagated in India, a struggle which united all 'serious' Christians, but it also concerned what Christianity should be propagated: that of the Established Church or that of any Protestant denomination or sect. This, of course, was a matter of religious toleration. The playing out of this question in the imperial arena also raised the fundamental question of how far 'heathen' religions should be countenanced and protected in British territories. The debate on all these aspects hinged on perceptions of the condition of Indians under their own religions and of the unrest that might be unleashed if unrestricted missionary activity were allowed. The latter question paralleled the concern felt in England that unrestricted home 'missionary' work practised by Methodists and Dissenters across parish boundaries might cause political unrest.

Apart from its significance in the campaign to gain religious liberty for all denominations of Protestants and the light it throws on imperial attitudes towards the 'heathen', this campaign raises many other interesting issues such as why missions should have caught the imagination of so many people and why India should have been the focus of attention. The campaign did not happen in isolation and cannot be understood simply in terms of a

struggle between the opponents and supporters of missionary activity per se. There were connections with other contemporary religious and humanitarian movements and the subject of the propagation of Christianity in India was being agitated in the midst of what was primarily an economic struggle over the continuation of the East India Company's trading monopoly. Did free traders, political radicals and Dissenters (not mutually exclusive groups of course) see themselves as allies in a struggle for liberty? Did evangelicals generally think that freer commerce could be an aid to the promulgation of Christianity, or did they regard these as two entirely separate issues?

The organisation of the campaign will be examined in some detail, both the 'high politics' and the 'popular' side, so that it can be put into the wider context of religious, political and social developments of the time, both in England and in India.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will deal with the high politics of the campaign and will highlight the tactics and critical points of the struggle. The next chapter will cover the petitioning movement and the public support for the missionary cause. A chronology of the main events in 1812-13 is included at Appendix 4.

By early 1812, when the select committee to investigate the affairs of the East India Company was set up, the battle lines had already been drawn in the pamphlets and

articles that had poured out in the wake of the Vellore Mutiny. On the one side were a number of 'old India-hands' who perceived great danger from any increase in missionary activity in India. On the other, were the evangelicals, joined by the Church of Scotland, the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty and the Protestant Dissenting Deputies, all of whom were determined not to be excluded from India. In the middle was the Church of England which was determined that all Protestant religious activity in India should be carried out under its superintendence.

The key figure in the campaign was William Wilberforce. There is no doubt that the missionary societies looked to Wilberforce for advice and expected him to be their chief and most influential spokesman in Parliament. The energy he devoted to this cause was extraordinary, particularly considering the number of other issues with which he found the time to deal. He gave political breakfasts and dinners and lobbied influential clerics, ministers, lords and MPs. Letters from him flew around the country, urging people to action. He also wrote for publication and suggested draft clauses for the new charter.<sup>5</sup>

In February 1812, Wilberforce wrote to Joseph Hardcastle expressing the religious and moral urgency of the question. This letter is very important because it sets the tone of

the campaign, describes the difficulties Wilberforce envisaged and outlines the strategy he felt would have to be adopted. He was not sanguine about victory in the House of Commons, telling Hardcastle that "if the unbiassed judgement of the House of Commons were to decide the question, fatal indeed would be the issue".

Wilberforce, therefore, expressed his belief that "the whole force of the religious world" would have to be mobilised. Hardcastle was not convinced and asked Wilberforce if it would not be "undesirable to agitate the religious part of the community . . . if the end could be obtained by a more calm and private process". He told him that if the Dissenters and Methodists could be assured that the Government would provide for the free admission of all missionaries to India, they would "abstain from all further proceedings on the subject".<sup>6</sup>

Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect were aware that the tactic of mobilising large numbers of the public had its dangers. It might well alienate the church and secular establishment and undo the work they had put in over the years to establish the respectability of the Church Missionary Society in particular and the missionary movement in general. Henry Thornton told Hannah More how "various doubts and difficulties perplex us" and how they debated whether to "excite meetings and petitions amongst the religious world". Thornton wondered if they dared hope



that the Church would take the lead? Their great fear was if the 'religious public' was called out at the start of the campaign, the Established Church would not follow.<sup>7</sup>

In Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect we can clearly see the tension that existed between their belief that the Church of England provided the purest and best form of Christianity when it was operating as it should and their knowledge that it was Methodism and New Dissent which had revitalised Christianity in England. Wilberforce needed the support of as many influential members of the bishops and clergy as possible. Without this, it would be virtually impossible to get the secular establishment to support or, at the very least, not to be antipathetic to the missionary case. As was discussed in Chapter 1, many Churchmen and politicians were indeed hostile to missionary activity at home and abroad, which they regarded as dangerous and distasteful religious 'enthusiasm'.<sup>8</sup> However, the hierarchy of the Established Church, appeared either unwilling or uninterested in seeing the Church of England active in missionary activity. The bishops held aloof even from the Church Missionary Society which had been set up expressly 'on the Church principle' in the hope that this antipathy to missions would be overcome.<sup>9</sup>

In order to persuade the Established Church to commit itself on the need to do more for Christianity in India, Wilberforce asked the Dissenters and Methodists to hold back from any public action until he had managed to persuade "a considerable party of the Church of England to interest themselves on the occasion". This was first and foremost a question of tactics but it also represented his conviction that the Church of England should assume the leading role. Wilberforce further requested that the Methodists and Dissenters postpone their demand for a repeal of the Conventicle Act because

such a discussion would infallibly produce a violent contest between all the high Churchmen and the Methodists and all classes of Dissenters; and when once the two parties should be arrayed against each other, I fear they would continue to oppose each other on the East Indian Instruction subject, as well as on the other.<sup>10</sup>

It is to the credit of the Dissenters and Methodists that they were prepared to delay because they were not without considerable misgivings. They knew that Wilberforce supported Buchanan's proposals for an ecclesiastical establishment in India and that Wilberforce wanted provision for this in the new charter. They also knew that he was keen to see the SPCK more active in India and the CMS start work there. In addition, the attempts of the Evangelical Company chaplains to control the Baptists, outlined in the previous chapter, had hardly given the Dissenters grounds for confidence. The Dissenting leaders

of the missionary lobby recognised that the Church of England had a privileged position as the established church but were determined to have 'toleration' for themselves in addition to any concessions that might be granted to the Church of England. Fuller of the Baptists, however, also realised that they were in danger of losing all through Church/Dissent rivalry. He told Ward that he had warned Wilberforce that Church Evangelicals, in suspecting Dissenters of undermining the Church, and Dissenters, in suspecting Evangelicals of "working to contract the toleration", were in danger of being like the mouse and frog in the fable, so busy brandishing their spears at one another that the opposition would be the winners.<sup>11</sup>

Wilberforce himself was aware that these tensions were affecting support for the campaign. He wrote in his diary that he was "sadly disappointed in finding even religious people so cold about the East Indian Instruction" and partly attributed this to "the sectaries having had a notion that the Church of England [was] to be established" there.<sup>12</sup> Wilberforce had to reassure John Ryland, the Baptist leader, that there was "room enough in the East for all denominations of xtians and that it would be his earnest endeavour to have free scope for the executing of all."<sup>13</sup>

The Baptists, LMS and Methodist leaders acquiesced in Wilberforce's strategy. Other campaigns had taught them

that much could be gained through back-door lobbying and that, if sufficient numbers of the Establishment were not prepared to be sympathetic, their cause would be lost. The 'missionary lobby' faced a difficult task ahead. Although the Methodists and Dissenters had the organisational framework through which rapidly to mobilise large numbers of people, the weight of 'public opinion' on its own had never yet forced Parliament to pass legislation. They needed Wilberforce's political weight in Parliament. In addition to having a powerful spokesman for their case, the missionary lobby also had to persuade Parliament not only that there was no political danger in the measure but also that, on balance, it was in its interests to make some concession.

Wilberforce, the missionary societies and other interested groups therefore concentrated first on the traditional method of lobbying influential members of the Establishment. Wilberforce, in an attempt to mobilise the Church, asked Thomas Gisborne to write a short pamphlet.<sup>14</sup> Wilberforce himself wrote an article for the Christian Observer "urging clergymen to come forward and press the communication of Christian light to the natives of India".<sup>15</sup> He talked to bishops and influential laymen. He badgered the SPCK and in May, along with Babington and Macaulay, and Thomas Thompson, the Methodist MP, was summoned to attend a special meeting chaired by the

Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject.<sup>16</sup> Wilberforce ensured that the SPCK was aware of Buchanan's 1805 Memoir of the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India.<sup>17</sup>

A letter from Archdeacon Pott, secretary of the SPCK East India Committee, tells us more of the activity behind the scenes at the SPCK. Pott thought that the Society should petition Parliament but the Bishop of London had vetoed this, pointing out that the SPCK was not a corporate body but a group of private individuals. The bishop suggested instead a memorial to the East India Company and Edward Parry was invited to attend the East India Committee of the SPCK to give advice. According to Pott, Parry gave the Committee "no encouragement in applying to Parliament" and seemed to regard the whole of India as the private estate of the Company." Pott was shattered by Parry's attitude and told Wilberforce that, as a result, "all designs which I had conceived were quite broken." Eventually Parry induced the Committee to follow "his advice of contenting ourselves with a memorial returning thanks for favour and requesting support for the missions in connection with the Society with the permission to enlarge them if we should find the means."<sup>18</sup>

Parry's attitude at the SPCK meeting helps explain a seeming inconsistency in Wilberforce. At the beginning of

1812, Wilberforce had stated that "the present inclination of my mind, [is] to throw open the whole, and even abolish the East India Company altogether, rather than not insure a passage for the entrance of light . . . ." <sup>19</sup> While Parry and Grant had also threatened Dundas with this, they were in fact staunch supporters of the Company's monopoly and believed that opening the doors of India to all and sundry would not only be injurious to the Company's trade but also harmful to the Indian people. It seems that Wilberforce deferred to their judgement on this.

Through the intervention of Pott and pressure from Wilberforce, nine resolutions, setting out the case for a full-scale ecclesiastical establishment, were approved by the SPCK at the end of June 1812 for dissemination to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the president of the Board of Control and the directors of the East India Company. Five hundred copies of the resolutions were also printed for the use of MPs. <sup>20</sup> According to Pott the resolutions were Wilberforce's "child" and both Pott and Wilberforce regarded the SPCK involvement as an important milestone. They felt that the involvement of this influential body in the Church of England, which had the support of the leading bishops, firmly placed the Church of England on the side of the principle that Christianity should be brought to the peoples of India. <sup>21</sup> On the other

hand, the SPCK resolutions confirmed the apprehensions of Dissenters because they made it quite clear that this was only a plea for an Anglican episcopal establishment in India. The SPCK also seemed to eschew active proselytism, speaking instead of inducing the 'natives' to become Christians "by the silent but persuasive pattern of religious fellowship, and the sober invitations of a settled ministry."<sup>22</sup> The SPCK position was extremely ambiguous but at least it had not come out in direct opposition to Dissenting claims.

Wilberforce did not confine his efforts to trying to rouse the Church of England. He also had a part in the involvement of the Church of Scotland in the campaign. As early as February 1812, he spoke to Cunninghame of Lainshaw to persuade the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to take up the cause of Christianising India.<sup>23</sup> This was not difficult as there were many Scots in India and the established Church of Scotland did not want to be left out of the running there. In addition to persuading the established churches to take an interest in Christianity in India, Wilberforce, together with other interested groups, lobbied key government ministers. The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty and the Missionary Society sent petitions to Perceval. The LMS decided to petition Parliament and the Prince Regent and to memorialise the Board of Control. The Church Missionary

Society held a public meeting and sent a deputation to Perceval, led by Lord Gambier. After Perceval's death, deputations waited on Lord Liverpool. Although all these actions appeared to have been carried out individually, they were in fact coordinated. On 15 April Wilberforce had met in conference with interested parties at Joseph Butterworth's and, in line with Wilberforce's tactic of separating the activities of Churchmen from those of the Methodists and Dissenters, it was decided that the different sects should separately approach Perceval and "the chief members in the House of Commons" and separately "inform the minds of their people every where throughout the country."<sup>24</sup> There was close liaison between the Saints, the Methodists and the Dissenters.

Perceval seems to have been somewhat lukewarm about the plans for increased missionary activity in India. He did not want to bring the question of religious rights into discussion and told Fuller that "as the charter wd allow various privileges to traders, he thought it must extend protection to them all, amongst whom religious people wd be included."<sup>25</sup> Perceval was deeply attached to the Church of England, regarding it as the lynch-pin of the constitution and it may be that the large involvement of Dissenters in the missionary movement did not appeal to him. Perhaps it was fortunate for the missionary lobby that Liverpool was at the head of government when the charter was debated



in Parliament. He seems to have been prepared to be more positive in his responses to their overtures than was Perceval.

Lord Liverpool, like Perceval, was a staunch supporter of the Established Church and was in favour of an ecclesiastical establishment in India. He also seemed to have some sympathy for missionary activity. According to Claudius Buchanan, the CMS deputation which met him in July 1812, shortly after he had come to power, was delighted with its reception. The deputation felt that Liverpool had offered "almost more than they had wished" by intimating his intention to grant licences for missionaries from the Board of Control, to consecrate bishops for India and to establish a seminary at each presidency for instructing 'natives' for the ministry.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, by the end of the year, the ground for the subsequent parliamentary battle had been prepared. The key political and clerical figures had been lobbied and the Church of England, through the SPCK, had accepted the necessity of doing more for Christianity in India and had not come out in decided opposition to Dissenting demands. General interest had been aroused in the question by the incessant propaganda of the missionary societies and a number of energetic individuals. This propaganda was stepped up. Claudius Buchanan was asked by the CMS to revamp his 1805

Memoir as a proposal for a full colonial ecclesiastical establishment, which it was hoped would make the proposals for India seem even more acceptable to the Established Church.<sup>27</sup> Robert Hall of the Baptists was similarly asked to prepare a pamphlet forcibly presenting the case for unrestricted missionary activity in India.<sup>28</sup> Pratt, the CMS secretary, prepared his plans for a magazine to be devoted entirely to missionary matters, The Missionary Register. This magazine would keep its readers closely in touch with the parliamentary campaign.

b. The Parliamentary Battle

The campaign began in earnest at the beginning of 1813. Fuller told Ward in January that they were "all on the alert to besiege Government and perhaps Parliament for a clause in favour of missions, or for liberty to send missionaries, and security when arrived."<sup>29</sup> In February the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge [SSPCK], the Scottish counterpart of the SPCK, sent the first of the religious petitions to Parliament. These petitions demonstrate the differences in the various groups uniting to put pressure on the Company and government to open the doors of India to Christianity. The Church of Scotland, like the SPCK, was concerned at the lack of an adequate ecclesiastical establishment for Europeans in

India. The SSPCK, however, was more concerned with the necessity and duty of propagating Christianity to the people of India.<sup>30</sup>

The Dissenters continued to try to exercise influence behind the scenes. At the beginning of February the Baptist leaders waited on Lord Liverpool. His words gave them little comfort and should be contrasted with the encouragement he gave the CMS leaders in July 1812 when they felt they had been offered "almost more than they had wished." This was partly because the Dissenters demanded more than the Church Evangelicals. While Liverpool assured the Baptists that he would do everything in the Government's power that could be done, he stressed that "we cannot allow you to send missionaries without leave, and when there, they must in common with merchants and all other Europeans, be under the controul of Government." He told them that if any injustice was done to the missionaries, they could appeal to the Board of Control as things stood. Liverpool also was not at all happy with the Baptist threat of public petitioning and it seems there was some element of Church/Dissent tension here. The CMS leaders had taken great care to stress their loyalty to the Established Church and were extremely conciliatory in tone. The Baptists, however, were more aggressive and Liverpool pointed out some of the previous indiscretions of their missionaries and told them that British continuance in

India depended upon Indian opinion and that Britain kept its dominion there "just so long as the natives think themselves unable to drive us out."<sup>31</sup>

The Baptist interview with Lord Buckinghamshire at the beginning of March was no more fruitful. Indeed, Fuller told Ward that he "had little hopes of success".

Buckinghamshire, like Liverpool, mentioned a disturbance which had occurred in Calcutta during some public preaching. He stressed the religious prejudices of the 'natives' and cited Vellore as an example of their volatility. He also took exception to the Baptist threat of public petitioning and scornfully retorted that "half of them would not understand what they signed." Nor did Fuller expect any help from the Whigs. As he put it, "although our liberty folks are mad to get the Catholics into power", they are "very cool as to obtaining toleration for you."<sup>32</sup> The debates in Parliament were to prove that Fuller was correct in this assessment.

In early March 1813, the CMS presented Lord Liverpool with a draft clause for inclusion in the charter. This clause provided that the Board of Control should be "authorized and required to grant, from time to time, licences to fit and proper persons to proceed to and reside in India for the purpose of communicating to the inhabitants of that country the blessings of religious instruction and moral

improvement." Lord Liverpool told the CMS that he was favourably disposed to an ecclesiastical establishment for India but reiterated his reservations about giving freedom of access to missionaries. Liverpool felt there "might be some danger of a clashing parties in India if unrestricted freedom of access to India were given to all sectarian missionaries as well as to those belonging to the Church." However, he declared that it was a point on which he had by no means made up his mind.<sup>33</sup>

While the CMS felt that it had everything to hope for from the Government, the Dissenters and Methodists were disappointed and apprehensive. By the beginning of March, Fuller had come to the conclusion that there was hope that missionaries would be permitted to go out to India in British ships but little hope of "a legal toleration" when they got there. His suspicions of Church Evangelical intentions had not abated and he warned Ward to be on the watch if the ecclesiastical establishment were granted, because the CMS was "exceedingly hungry after your labours, or rather the honour of them".<sup>34</sup> The PSPRL held a public meeting on 2 March and sent strongly-worded resolutions to Lord Liverpool, the Board of Control and the directors of the East India Company, reminding them that the Society represented "many hundred thousand Dissenters throughout England and Wales." The first resolution explicitly avowed their determination to fight for the protection of

religious freedom and for "the enjoyment of that liberty in every part of the British empire throughout the world." The Society "deplored" and "condemned" every obstacle to the promulgation of Christianity in India and believed that "Christians of every sect should be permitted, unlicensed, to explain, and peaceably to promulgate . . . the holy religion which they profess, and should enjoy the equal protection of the state."<sup>35</sup>

Having made their feelings clearly felt to the Government, all parties then had to wait for the introduction of the resolutions of the investigating committee to the House of Commons. When Castlereagh introduced these on 22 March, the worst fears of the Dissenters and Church Evangelicals were realized. There was a clause setting up an Anglican episcopal establishment in India but no 'pious clause'. Wilberforce immediately objected, supported by William Smith and James Stephen. The omission is puzzling. Henry Thornton told a friend that Liverpool had failed to brief Castlereagh, and that none of the religious groups had thought to wait on him.<sup>36</sup> Indications, however, are that the omission was a deliberate decision of Government. Lord Liverpool had been consistent in expressing his aversion to giving freedom of access to missionaries, particularly Dissenters and his interest appeared to be in furthering the status of the Church of England in India rather than missionary activity. Lords Buckinghamshire

and Castlereagh were known to be against any lessening of restrictions for missionaries.

According to Fuller, Castlereagh's omission "operated like an electric shock through the land, and united all friends of xnty in a determination to petition without a moments delay."<sup>37</sup> It would be more accurate to say that the shock went through the religious leaders, who now realized without doubt that the religious public would have to be aroused if Parliament was to be induced to do something further for them. Wilberforce immediately began writing to his friends and contacts, urging them to exert themselves to stir up petitions. To Churchmen he particularly made the point that it should not only be Methodists and Dissenters who took "an interest in the happiness of mankind".<sup>38</sup> The Dissenters and Methodists were just as active as Wilberforce in rousing their people and public meetings began to be called. A committee was formed to manage the presentation of the petitions. This committee sent the petitions to the appropriate MPs and peers, together with a plea that they signify their approval of the prayer of the petitions when presenting them. Nearly 900 petitions poured into each House in April and May, signed by approximately half a million people.

On 30 March 1813, Lord Liverpool made the following four points plain to the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty:

1. He stressed that open trade did not mean open licence and that licences would continue to be required for all.
2. He affirmed that "it was the duty of government to extend the benefits of Christianity to the inhabitants of India".
3. He confirmed that licences would be granted to Dissenters generally, not just to members of the Established Church.
4. He added the cautionary note that the authority of government must be upheld in the eyes of the Hindu and that no intention of "violating their prejudices" must be shown.

In reply to the PSPRL's request for a specific recognition of the right of missionaries to labour in India, Lord Liverpool stated that this could not be granted.<sup>39</sup>

On 31 March, Wilberforce attended a meeting of the select committee to discuss "the religious bearing of the East India Company's charter." Wilberforce wrote in his diary that "Lords Liverpool and Buckinghamshire acceded to the former concession, that the Board of Control should be authorized and required to grant licences to fit and proper persons to go to India as missionaries."<sup>40</sup> It seems that there had been a compromise between Liverpool and Castlereagh to the effect that there would be no explicit mention of missionaries in any new law but the Board of



Control would be granted the power to licence persons for India.<sup>41</sup> The missionary lobby was 'back to square one'. It had succeeded in obtaining 'fair words' from the Government but no promise of specific legislative recognition of their demands. The time for public action had come. The Dissenters were convinced of this and even Wilberforce feared that although "the government is well-disposed towards us", it was "highly probable that they be overborne by the sense of parliament, especially by that of the House of Commons, if the feelings of the public be not plainly expressed."<sup>42</sup>

The PSPRL was not at all happy with these developments and wrote a strong memorial to Lord Liverpool setting out its objections. It was worried that the plans for an episcopal establishment would exclude them and did not regard the proposal that the Board of Control should have discretionary power over the matter of licences for missionaries as an advance. On the contrary, the Society maintained that it was the

inalienable right of every Christian missionary to promulgate the gospel of the Lord, and to teach all nations unto the end of the world . . . without obtaining licences from any human authority, and without depending for the continuance of his labours on human caprice.<sup>43</sup>

Matters deteriorated still further when the committee of the whole House began taking evidence on East India

Company affairs on 30 March. This was taken over by a select committee on 14 April. The examination of witnesses was not advantageous to the missionary cause. The majority of witnesses were 'old India-hands', who feared the results of missionary activity in India. Most of the questions concerning Christianity were posed in such a way that the witnesses, even if favourable to missionary activity, could only reply that danger could not be ruled out. Even Lord Teignmouth found it difficult to turn the questions to advantage.

As the examination of witnesses in the Lords was about to begin, the Clapham Sect was anxious to do something to limit the damage in both Houses. Wilberforce, Henry Thornton, Babington, Grant and Stephen accordingly met to discuss strategy. It was decided that Wilberforce should persuade both Houses that religion should be left out of the questioning. Wilberforce waited on Lord Grenville, who was "dry and cold upon the matter."<sup>44</sup> He wrote to Lord Wellesley, a long-time friend, and asked him to use his influence to stop any unfavourable questioning in the House of Lords. Wilberforce certainly used the wisdom of the serpent in his arguments. First, he tried to separate Wellesley from the opponents of missionary activity by stating that the "alarmists are enemies of the system which your Lordship certainly established . . . that I mean of diffusing useful knowledge of all sorts among the

natives of India . . . ." Secondly, he appealed to Wellesley's vanity by comparing his vast knowledge of India with the generality of the peers. Missionaries were only mentioned once, the crux of Wilberforce's argument being that "education, the translation and diffusion of the Scriptures, and advancement in general knowledge, would be by far the most powerful agents in the great work of Christianizing the natives of India." These were the only methods approved by Wellesley during his time in India.<sup>45</sup>

Wellesley appears to have done what Wilberforce asked and somehow Wilberforce achieved a similar success in the Commons because, after this, the questioning in both Houses was confined to commerce and politics. However, Wellesley's role as defender of the missionary cause should not be taken at face value. On 9 April he made the motion for papers on the East India Company in the House of Lords. His comments on missionary activity can only be regarded as equivocal. Wellesley strongly supported a "more respectable footing for our ecclesiastical establishment", which he believed would "elevate the European character in the eyes of the natives." However, he also stated that this must be done "with caution and delicacy." As for the conversion of the 'natives', Wellesley felt this could best be achieved through education and the translation of the Scriptures, a view very similar to that expressed by Wilberforce in his letter. However, Wellesley stressed

that any such measures should "not appear to be recommended by the authority of the government" because in India "the recommendation of the government is supposed to be almost equivalent to a mandate" and might cause alarm. He stated that his policy as governor-general had been to allow the translation of the Scriptures but not to order their dissemination, maintaining that "a Christian governor could not have done less . . . and a British governor ought not to do more."

It could, of course, be argued that Wellesley was following Wilberforce's lead in steering a very cautious line in mentioning missionary activity in the House of Lords. It has to be said that he spoke highly of the Baptist missionaries in India while he was governor-general and stated his belief that they had caused no alarm. This was an important testimony in establishing their respectability in the eyes of the Lords and Commons. However, Wellesley did not say anything about his views on the future progress of missionary activity except to state that there was a point beyond which a Christian assembly legislating for an empire should not go in implanting its religion in its dominions. This was hardly an unqualified approval and when, taken together with his friendship and patronage of Prendergast, Montgomery, Forbes, Marsh and Vanderheyden, the most bitter opponents of missionary

activity in the Commons, his commitment to the missionary cause can only be regarded as in some doubt.<sup>45</sup>

The opponents of missionary activity, mainly long-serving members of the East India Company such as Toone and Warren Hastings were horrified at the cessation of questioning on religious topics in the Lords and Commons. They also suspected Parry and Grant of exerting their influence to leave everything relating to the clerical establishment and missionaries out of the Court's publication of evidence. Later Toone discovered that the omissions were by order of Sir Hugh Inglis, the chairman.<sup>47</sup> Wilberforce's tactic was not a complete success. He had persuaded Wellesley to stop the questioning on religious aspects because he believed it was "far better for our cause, to rest it on the notorious facts of the case, and on the plain undeniable obligations which it involves, than on the evidence to be delivered at the bar."<sup>48</sup> However, leaving the matter of religion out of the questions put to witnesses meant that there was no evidence before Parliament on which to base a judgement and Wilberforce found that he had to move for "sundry papers to illustrate the moral character of the Hindoos, and the shocking practices prevalent there". He hoped that the public's "respect for religion" would "counterbalance the neutralizing efforts of the East Indians."<sup>49</sup>

Despite their tactical successes, Wilberforce and his friends were apprehensive about the future. Wilberforce castigated himself for his misspent time, wasted habits and softness instead of the hardness he should have had as a "good soldier of Christ."<sup>50</sup> Always at the forefront of Wilberforce's mind was the failure he had experienced during the 1793 renewal of the East India Company's charter. Wilberforce even began to doubt the "expediency" of the proposal for an episcopal establishment. He told a friend in Bristol that both he and Babington feared that the person to be appointed bishop by the Archbishop of Canterbury would be hostile to both missionaries and Evangelicals.<sup>51</sup> Henry Thornton was in no doubt that the "intended bishop is for the purpose of controuling missionaries, not perhaps by his own power but indirectly through his influence with the government".<sup>52</sup>

Wilberforce therefore agonised over how he should go forward and the specific terms for which to strive. He consulted with the Baptists and the LMS over the wording of the clause and told George Burder of the LMS:

It is a most difficult question to decide upon. We may lose all by striving for too much. Yet I wish to obtain as much as possible again. It is by no means clear, that we may not enjoy more practical security for missionaries by conditions which may appear more restricted on the face of them.<sup>53</sup>

What Wilberforce was referring to here was the desire of the Dissenters that licences should not be required at all for the entrance of missionaries to India. He advised the Baptists that it would be "in vain" to ask for more than for "fit and proper persons" to be judged by the Board of Controul".<sup>54</sup> Wilberforce was astute enough to realize that insistence on unrestricted access to India for missionaries might well jeopardise the overall cause. He therefore did not repeat the mistake of 1793 and strive for too much. He kept the demands as limited and vague as possible. His draft clause left discretionary power as to how the religious improvement of Indians could best be achieved in the hands of government, through the Board of Control. The PSPRL seems to have come to a similar conclusion that Dissenters might lose all by demanding too much. A letter to Lord Liverpool at the end of April demonstrates an anxiety not to alienate him and much of it is spent assuring him of their respect and their reluctance "to excite their country constituents to any exertions for the attainment of that boon which you had already promised to confer." They informed him that the Society had agreed that its policy was to invite cooperation with the Government "for the attainment of an object which they were desirous to promote [rather] than to endeavour to extort from them a benefit they were unwilling to bestow." Although the PSPRL now accepted that the Government was not prepared to grant unrestricted residence to

missionaries, it still hoped to be able to influence the wording of the clause by suggesting "alterations whereby the security of missionaries may be promoted without infringing the discretionary power which to the Commissioners for the Affairs of India your Lordship expressed your intention to reserve".<sup>55</sup>

During April and May the missionary lobby organised public meetings and petitions poured into both Houses of Parliament. There were intense efforts to whip up a favourable vote in Parliament. Wilberforce, Grant and Stephen concentrated on influencing the Commons and [Josiah] Pratt on the Lords. All this energy seemed to bear fruit when on 26 May Wilberforce wrote in his diary that "Lord Buckinghamshire acceded to our terms", as did Lord Castlereagh the following day.<sup>56</sup> The 'terms' were embodied in Resolution 13<sup>57</sup> and "far surpassed" Wilberforce's expectations, although not those of the Dissenters.

Castlereagh, after his unpromising start, was largely responsible for the eventual inclusion of a 'pious clause' in the new charter. His first success was on 3 June when he succeeded in getting Resolution 13 accepted 'pro forma' despite opposition.<sup>58</sup> Castlereagh tried to stem the opposition by expressing the hope that "this question should not be discussed in that House, such discussion



being too likely to produce mischief in India."<sup>59</sup>

Opposition was such, however, that Castlereagh's wish was not granted and Resolution 13 came under full discussion on 22 June. Castlereagh was also being put under pressure by the PSPRL and the Methodists, who were most unhappy that Resolution 12, referring to the proposed ecclesiastical establishment and Resolution 13, the 'pious clause', were separated. From Lord Castlereagh's privately expressed indifference, they feared that it was a ploy to let the Established Church achieve its demands while losing the more general missionary clause later in the face of the hostility against it. The Dissenters wanted the Government to ensure that the House of Commons "distinctly understood . . . that the Government earnestly desire" the adoption of Resolution 13.<sup>60</sup>

Castlereagh started the debate on 22 June by stressing that the Government had no intention of allowing "an unrestrained and unrestricted resort of persons to India for religious purposes" and stating his belief that "under proper controul no evil was likely to occur." Sir Henry Montgomery, who had lived in India for 20 years, rose to object.. Then followed a powerful and extremely lengthy speech by Wilberforce. In the resulting division, there was a majority of 53 for the Resolution.<sup>61</sup>

Wilberforce was delighted and wrote to Burder of the LMS that "God has favoured us far beyond my latter expectations." However, he issued a warning that it was "of far more consequence to carry what we do obtain with a high hand, than to obtain a little more of the letter of the statute."<sup>62</sup> Wilberforce meant two things by this statement. First of all, he meant that the missionary lobby in Parliament must be seen to be strong in numbers. He expected a severe conflict at the next debate and knew the Saints must rally all their strength for the fight. Wilberforce therefore wrote to his friends urging them to be present in London for the debate, particularly as "so many people have gone out of town, and the East Indians, our enemies, will assuredly stay."<sup>63</sup>

Wilberforce also feared that the Methodists and Dissenters would vitiate the progress made by insisting on more. The Wesleyans, notwithstanding, submitted to Lord Castlereagh a clause which would answer some of their apprehensions. They were not only worried about the possibility of continuing restrictions on missionary activity but also about whether or not their own church members would be able to worship as they wished under their own preachers in India. The Wesleyans wrote a strong letter to this effect to Lord Castlereagh. Allen, in particular, did not think that Resolution 13 would give a legal protection to their missionaries. When the

Wesleyans waited on him on 28 June, Castlereagh advised them to leave the clause alone in case they lost all. Reluctantly they deferred to his judgement.<sup>64</sup>

As Wilberforce and the Dissenters feared, the opposition did not give up and returned to the fray at the second reading of the bill on 1 July, despite Lord Castlereagh's "strong wish that this clause might be allowed for the present to pass without discussion" because "it was very important to get through the Bill in the committee as expeditiously as could be done". Charles Marsh, who had been in the Admiralty Court in Madras for many years, countered Wilberforce's points with an extremely long and well-argued speech, putting paid to such hopes. Wilberforce had to make another long speech in rebuttal. When the House divided there was the majority for the Resolution 13 was reduced to 22.<sup>65</sup> The final battle in the Commons took place on 12 July when the opponents of the clause tried to have the preamble to the clause omitted. Once again they failed and the original clause was approved by a majority of 24.<sup>66</sup>

Lord Buckinghamshire skilfully steered Resolution 13 through the Lords. In fact the question was scarcely discussed and Buckinghamshire was able to defuse criticism of it by pointing out that, for the first time, there was a clause inserted in the Company's charter making it

"imperative upon the government of India to secure to the natives the free exercise of their religion".<sup>67</sup> While the missionary lobby stressed the importance of the preamble to Resolution 13 which maintained the principle that Britain should provide for the "moral and religious improvement" of India, Buckinghamshire concentrated on the subsequent caveats to this general principle.

The general attitude of the East India Company towards the promulgation of Christianity in India in 1813 remained the ambivalent one set out in the 1808 despatch to Lord Minto that, on the one hand, it was alive to the "benefits which would result from the general diffusion of its doctrines" but, on the other, great caution must be used. The Company's duty as the paramount power in India was to see that no coercion was used.<sup>68</sup> Throughout the management of its Indian territories, the Company held firm to the principle that Indians must have the free exercise of their religion. The Company's servants examined in the Lords and Commons generally held fast to the rectitude of this policy, while making it clear that they were not against missionaries per se and acknowledging that missionaries had operated in Bengal for seventeen years without causing alarm. The argument was strengthened by the Company's attitude to the admission of Europeans generally to India. Many who had served in the Company, including Charles Grant and Lord Teignmouth, had long maintained that allowing free

access to Europeans, missionary or otherwise, would open the floodgates to adventurers of all sorts who would lower the opinion of the British in the eyes of Indians and might even subvert them with democratic principles. Comments made in the parliamentary debates by men such as Marsh show that Dissenters and Methodists were still regarded as undesirable persons in the eyes of some.

The argument used by witnesses and in the debates was very similar to that of 1793: fear of turning Indians against British rule if the British government was seen to sanction missionary activity. It was felt that, as the missionaries were of the same race as the rulers, Indians would identify their efforts with official attempts to coerce them into becoming Christians. The argument was strengthened by reference to Vellore. Even Lord Teignmouth in his evidence was hard put to deny that unrest might occur.

Subsidiary arguments against the missionaries included the accurate assertion that converts to Christianity were very few. It was also claimed that, on the whole, only the dregs of society had turned to Christianity. Finally, it was argued that Hindus were so attached to their faith that the only way to convert India would be through oppression and even extirpation. Marsh provided an eloquent spokesman for those who regarded missionaries as 'vulgar fanatics'. In words reminiscent of Sidney Smith in

1808 and Lord Sidmouth in 1811, Marsh mentioned his fears that Buckinghamshire's successor at the Board of Control might feel that "every inspired cobbler, or fanatical tailor, who feels an inward call, has a kind of apostolic right to assist in the spiritual siege" and wondered "are the missionaries, whom this Bill is to let loose upon India, fit engines to accomplish the greatest revolution that has yet taken place in the history of the world?"<sup>69</sup> The Dissenting missionaries had not yet managed to establish their respectability in all circles.

The arguments in support of missions appealed both to Britain's spiritual duty and to her self-interest. The religious argument pointed out that it was the duty of a Christian country to promulgate Christianity throughout the world. The supporters of missionary activity maintained that Britain had been granted dominion over India by Providence for a divine purpose: that of improving the spiritual and material condition of the people. This, in the view of evangelicals, could only be accomplished by the inculcation of Christian principles. Britain would, therefore, be answerable to God at the final Judgement if she gave support to idolatry and failed to bring the blessings of Christianity to the people. Linked with this was the humanitarian dimension that the 'disgusting' practices of sati, infanticide and hook-swinging could be stopped through the permeation of Christian values without

requiring an order of government. The pragmatic arguments appealed to Britain's self-interest by stressing the utility of Christianity in leading to the moral and material improvement of the people and in aiding political stability through providing a bond between rulers and ruled. These were essentially the same arguments as had been used in the 1793 debates over the 'pious clause'.

The advocates of missions felt it necessary to underpin their arguments with a picture of the depraved native, in the greatest need of regeneration, which could not satisfactorily be achieved except through the inculcation of Christianity. The missionary supporters were fortunate that they had a ready-made weapon with the Hindu practices mentioned above, practices which would easily revolt 'civilized' Western society. From the publication of the first Baptist Periodical Accounts, missionary literature made the most of the colourful propaganda provided by these so-called religious practices. Wilberforce, in his long speech of 22 June also drew heavily on Grant's Observations which by now had been widely disseminated and was highly regarded, and on the results of Wellesley's 1801 Interrogatories to his magistrates in India, which were not at all flattering to the character of the Hindu.<sup>70</sup> All this provided Wilberforce with an impressive array of authorities for his picture of the utter degradation of the Hindu.

As in 1793, the opponents of missionary activity tried to refute this image of the Hindu. Warren Hastings' picture of the Hindus as

gentle, benevolent, more susceptible of gratitude for kindness shewn them, than prompted to vengeance for wrongs inflicted, and as exempt from the worst propensities of human passion as any people upon the face of the earth; they are faithful and affectionate in service, and submissive to legal authority; they are superstitious it is true . . . . Gross as the modes of their worship are, the precepts of their religion are wonderfully fitted to promote the best ends of society, its peace and good order. . . .<sup>71</sup>

could not have been further from the missionary picture of the Hindu. Sir Henry Montgomery, ex-Company officer and supporter of Lord Wellesley, went so far as to say that he thought the character of the Hindu "a great deal better than the moral character of the people of this country in general."<sup>72</sup> The strongest case against the supporters of Resolution 13 was given by Marsh in his speech of 1 July, which ably attacked the flaws in Wilberforce's argument. In this speech Marsh quoted Col Thomas Munro's view that, "if civilization was to become an article of trade between the two countries, he was convinced this country would gain by the import cargo" and pointed out that "hatred and contempt for those whom you govern, must, in the very nature of things, convert your government into a stern and savage oppression." Marsh's views were very much in consonance with those of Warren Hastings. Marsh also made much of the Saints' defence of the Company's monopoly.<sup>73</sup>



It is difficult to know just what those who had served in India really believed about the Hindu, but it is clear that the 'missionary viewpoint' had gained ground since 1793. Both sides had axes to grind and used the arguments most favourable to their case. However, the character of the Hindu was not as important to the anti-missionary case as it was to the missionary. What the anti-missionaries had to demonstrate was that the religious prejudices of the natives were so excitable that there was a real danger in passing Resolution 13. This they patently failed to do, the example of the Vellore Mutiny notwithstanding.

While Resolution 13 aroused heated discussion on the House of Commons, Resolution 12, proposing an episcopal establishment for India, attracted very little comment. In fact, there was little discussion in either House on the clause and it passed without division. The only amendment requested came from members of the Church of Scotland, who believed that it had an equal right with the Church of England to an ecclesiastical establishment in India. This demand was dropped after assurances from the Company that "they would at their own expence maintain the Presbyterian ministers, and afford them all proper means to assist in the promulgation and exercise of their faith."<sup>74</sup> Warren Hastings was one of the few persons who seemed to acknowledge the logical implications of granting an episcopal establishment in India: that this, far more

than the activities of unlicensed missionaries, could be regarded by the natives as the beginning of official compulsion to become Christians.<sup>76</sup>

Members of the Opposition in the Lords did not appear to be very interested in the religious clauses. Lord Grenville did not mention them at all and, although Earl Grey asserted that he supported the principle of the petitions, he had reservations about the method and was absolutely against government interference and force. The Earl of Lauderdale's concern was for the provision of a Church of Scotland ecclesiastical establishment. He was completely against missionary activity and trusted "that the aid of power wouldn't be called in to attempt to give effect to the propagation of Christianity in India, as that would tend to the utter ruin of our empire in that quarter."<sup>76</sup>

In the Commons, George Tierney, the leading Whig commoner, was one of Wilberforce's most obstinate opponents.

Forbes, Keene, Moore, Robinson and, most vehemently of all, Marsh, spoke against the Resolution. These men seem to have been speaking more as 'old India- hands' than as members of the Opposition, although no doubt the fact that they considered themselves to be in opposition to Lord Liverpool's government must have been a factor. Tierney's arguments seemed to be a re-run of the arguments over Pitt's India Bill. He argued that the destruction of the Company's monopoly would place "directly in the hands of

the crown, the increased patronage which another army and an Indian revenue of 17 millions a year would give them". Following this line of reasoning, he regarded Resolution 12 as a "gross job, the object of which was church patronage in India."<sup>77</sup> In his view the power of licensing to be given to the Board of Control meant that "he would be most successful in obtaining licences who had the most parliamentary influence at his back."

c. The Battle Won: Whose Victory?

Reversing Lord Wellesley's words of 9 April, Sir Thomas Acland told the House of Commons on 2 July that "a Christian Parliament could not do less - a British Parliament could not do more" [than include Resolution 13 in the new charter].<sup>78</sup> After a hard-fought battle this was finally achieved on 12 July in the Commons and 20 July in the Lords. Wilberforce and his friends regarded this as a significant victory for the missionary movement. They had been fortunate in a number of respects. First of all, the proposal for an ecclesiastical establishment, in the event, proved to be a non-issue and this meant that energies could be concentrated on the 'pious clause'. Secondly, the East India Company's request for a delay to call witnesses also enabled the missionary lobby to rally support for the inclusion of the 'pious clause' after it had been omitted by Lord Castlereagh. The cause was also helped by the fact

that the Government was not hostile to some provision for missionaries and was prepared to be persuaded.

Lord Liverpool's attitude was crucial and the success of the 1813 'pious clause' followed the path charted by other successful religious issues in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade. This succeeded only once the Government was prepared to give it support or at least not to stand in its way. Correspondence indicates that Lord Liverpool had some sympathy with missionary activity. As early as 1799 he had written to the LMS, thanking it for a copy of their Missionary Journal and "intimating that he should be happy to render the society any service in his power." Thereafter he helped the LMS on a number of occasions including supporting it in 1811 over trouble in Demerara and Africa.<sup>79</sup> Liverpool had revealed something of his attitude towards Dissenters and Methodists during the debates over Lord Sidmouth's attempt to tighten up the Toleration Act in 1811. He privately told Lord Sidmouth that he would not object to the proposed bill "if it could be carried with the consent or acquiescence of the Dissenters." However, the flood of petitions into Parliament indicated that this was impossible and Liverpool doubted whether it would be judicious "considering the flame which appears to be arising upon the occasion." He pointed out to Sidmouth that the Dissenters had "brought

forward no claims and have engaged in no political controversy with the Establishments of the country for the last fifteen years." This, Liverpool argued, had been of great advantage in "all our contests with the Catholics" and he was "apprehensive" that if Sidmouth persisted with his measure it would "unite the Catholics and all other Dissenters in the same cause."<sup>80</sup>

It seems undeniable that the 1813 petitioning campaign had a similar effect on Government and Parliament. Lord Liverpool decided in 1813 that concessions should be made to the demands of the missionary lobby and indicated his government's support of the principle. He seems to have believed that the question was not worth alienating such large numbers of loyal and respectable subjects for a concession that could be granted with sufficient safeguards. The Baptists were sure that the petitions had a powerful effect on parliament. Fuller told Carey, Marshman and Ward that "such was the effect of the petitions both in Lords and Commons that we met with a very respectful reception in almost every instance. They seemed to think that if they did not grant our requests the nation would rise up agst them".<sup>81</sup> Thornton did not go so far. He told Bowdler that the effect of the petitions was not "great" and that he believed that MPs would not be "much influenced by the generality of the petitions". Nevertheless, he hoped that the Government would take

notice of them and individual MPs would "mind their constituents."<sup>2</sup> Wilberforce believed that the strength of public petitions could only increase the missionary lobby's influence with Government. He was happy to accept the 'pious clause' as a start and afterwards to act on the agreed system. The fact that, without exception, all speakers in the debates found it necessary to stress their personal commitment to Christianity, seems to indicate at least a concern not to alienate the religious public unnecessarily.

Another favourable factor was the wording of the Resolution itself which was very moderate, leaving discretion in the hands of government while maintaining the right of Indians to the free exercise of their religion. It was difficult, therefore, for the enemies of missionary activity to build up a strong case against it. The Company, for its part, was far more concerned to salvage as much as possible of its commercial monopoly than to spend time and energy on religious clauses, which still left the Company with the right to control the activities of the missionaries in India.

Once committed to support of Resolution 13, Castlereagh and Buckinghamshire loyally used all their skill to get the measure through Parliament as quickly as possible, although indications are that they were not sympathetic. This

support was probably critical. According to Phillips, of the 100 members or so who turned out for the debates, the Government had a comfortable majority.<sup>83</sup> Neither the supporters nor the opponents of missionary activity could muster a decisive vote on their own. Bradley has estimated that there were perhaps twenty-nine regular 'Saints' plus eleven 'occasional Saints' in Parliament in 1813.<sup>84</sup> Toone told Hastings that "the members of the Court who were in Parliament; the City of London members, and all the London interest, the old servants of the Company, altogether united made up but forty-three."<sup>85</sup> Numbers were therefore about even if the 'Company interest' were not split on the question. The Company interest was split, but to balance this some other members of Parliament shared their fears. However, the Evangelical vote in Parliament was one which both Government and Opposition tried to woo. Lord Liverpool treated Wilberforce with particular respect and circumspection. The Government, with a war to prosecute, was also concerned that there should be no problems of public order. Concessions to the religiously-minded 'middle ranks of society', with appropriate safeguards, seemed but a 'politic' compromise. On this occasion, Government support gave the missionary lobby the edge and was probably decisive in the inclusion of the Resolution.

Government support on its own would not, however, have been sufficient. The energy of the Saints in ensuring that as

many sympathetic members as possible attended the relevant debates was also crucial. Humanitarian feelings may have been a consideration for those members who had no particular opinions on the religious side. As the debates continued, their energy was necessary in order to keep the issue at the forefront of members' minds and to persuade supporters to turn up for the divisions. On 22 June, 125 members of the House felt strongly enough about the Resolution to turn up for the division, despite the lateness of the hour and the fact that it was very late in the session. A sizeable majority voted in favour of it. The 125 members who voted was a fair turn-out for this period, when it was very rare for more than 100 members to be present in the House.

However, this was not the end of the struggle as the opposition refused to give up, deciding that their best tactic was to try and emasculate the resolution by having the preamble deleted. At the next division, total numbers were down to eighty-six, with fifty-four voting to keep the original Resolution. The final vote was on 12 July when numbers were down to seventy-three. Forty-eight voted for the original resolution and twenty-four against. The declining interest is not surprising. It was very late in the session and and most members probably felt they had expressed their wishes on 22 June and that there was little more to say. Nonetheless, this is not to



diminish the problem for the Saints because, with such small numbers in the House, it would have been easy for the opposition to steal a march on them. Opponents of missionary activity had given every indication that they would leave no stone unturned to make the resolution ineffective. Those MPs who did not turn up for the debates indicated acquiescence, if not agreement, with the basic principle. The House had proved on other occasions, that members would turn out in great numbers if they felt their perceived interests were threatened. By 1813, the power of the East India Company was waning in the House. It could not protect its monopoly let alone defeat a clause about missionary activity in India.

The attitude of the Church of England hierarchy was also a favourable factor despite the fears of many. The acknowledgement of the bishops of the principle that Christianity should be brought to India helped make the idea of missionary activity there more acceptable. The success of the Bible Society, which had adopted a deliberate policy of letting the Established Church take the lead, had shown what could be achieved if a scheme appeared to have the support of the Church of England. Of course, the real reason for the Church's involvement was to make sure that it controlled ecclesiastical matters in India. The Church hierarchy had come to the view that, as religious dissent was an unavoidable fact of life, it would

be better to ensure that the Church was in a position to control Dissenting activities if necessary. This was provided by Resolution 12. Resolution 13 contained sufficient safeguards to prevent unbridled missionary activity. If the Church opposed the Resolution, it would only make it vulnerable to accusations of going against God's commands. It was not worth a battle. The Church of Scotland for its part backed down on receipt of assurances that provision would be made for the religious needs of their countrymen in India.<sup>86</sup>

In the wake of the great success of the petitioning campaign, the Baptists had approached Lord Liverpool for further concessions. However, they gained no further ground, finding all the members of both Houses of the same mind. The Baptists came away "convinced that this was all that can be expected".<sup>87</sup> The Methodists approached Lord Castlereagh, who advised them to "let it alone" and Butterworth came to the conclusion that to push for more would prove injurious to the small concessions they had gained. Wilberforce gave them similar advice and Methodist and Dissenting leaders reluctantly decided to let well alone.<sup>88</sup> In private, they admitted that their success had been circumscribed. In public, they trumpeted Section 33 as a great victory for the 'religious public' of Britain.

The 'victory' of 1813 was ambiguous. The statutory provision of a bishop and three archdeacons was undoubtedly a success for the Church of England and the Saints had a great part to play in this. Although not enshrined in statute, the East India Company also agreed to provide for three Presbyterian chaplains in India.<sup>89</sup> This recognised the large numbers of Scots in India and the pressure of the Church of Scotland in Britain. Thus, the wishes of the established churches in Britain were, to some extent, accommodated. The same cannot be said of the more general clause asserting Britain's duty to provide for the happiness and religious and moral improvement of Indians. The Government seems to have been very skilful in its negotiations over this 'pious clause'. It is usually said that the clause 'permitted' missionaries to go to India. However, as has been pointed out, missionaries had never been excluded from India under the terms of the Company's charter. They were categorised along with all other Europeans wishing to reside in India and residence was permitted at the discretion of the Court of Directors and local governors. The Company's discretion to declare certificates and licences void 'if it shall appear to them that the persons, to whom they have been granted, have forfeited their claim to countenance and protection' remained in the new charter. The position of the missionaries had advanced in as much as, for the first time, statutory provision was made for an appeal to the

Board of Control if the Court refused permission to persons wishing to proceed to India "to introduce among the native inhabitants of British India useful knowledge and religious and moral improvement." However, apart from this possibility of an appeal, the legal position of missionaries wishing to reside in India remained unchanged. Moreover, missionaries were not specified as such in the Act, the relevant section of which was phrased in nebulous terms.<sup>90</sup>

The caveat that Indians should have the free exercise of their religion was a principle to which the Company had adhered throughout the management of its Indian territories and continued to be the policy until the end of its sovereignty in India. The phrase 'for religious and moral improvement' is very vague. Both sides seem to have accepted that it was 'long-hand' for 'missionaries' but it was a compromise. On the one hand, the Saints did not want to press the point because they had learned the lesson of 1793. On that occasion Wilberforce's use of this phrase had been accepted because of its ambiguity and it was not until Wilberforce made it more explicit, specifying schoolmasters and missionaries, that the clause had failed. On the other hand, the Government was prepared to accept the clause, as the House of Commons had done in 1793, because it gave flexibility of action if ever it was thought necessary to curb missionary activity. Of course,

the passing of a clause declaring that the country accepted it had a duty to promote religious and moral improvement in India was an advance and reflected popular feeling on the matter. The Company would henceforward have to be sure it had a strong case before refusing licences to missionaries. A hostile Board could have kept the situation much as before and discretion was still left in the hands of local governors.

The East India Company, through the continuing requirement for licences, could still in theory determine what Christianity should be propagated in India. It also retained the right to determine where and how missionaries should proceed. The age-old Company policy that Indian religions should be protected had been strongly reiterated. It was therefore a limited political victory for the missionary lobby. The Dissenters had not been ignored, yet they did not get all they wanted. The success of Section 33 for the missionaries could only be judged by future events in India.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Copy letter Thornton to Bowdler, 6 Feb 1813, CUL Thornton MSS 7674/1/L4, 63.
2. Wilberforce to Hardcastle, 15 Feb 1812, cited in The Fathers and Founders of the LMS, J Morison, 2 vols, London, nd, I, 366 and Wilberforce to Wellesley, 14 April 1806, BL Add MSS 37309, 287.
3. A discussion of the conduct of this campaign forms a small part of the following: F K Brown, Fathers of the Victorians, Cambridge 1961; E M Howse, Saints in Politics, Toronto, 1952; I Bradley, unpublished DPhil thesis, 'The Politics of Godliness: Evangelicals in Parliament 1784-1832', Oxford, 1974 and A K Davidson, unpublished PhD thesis, 'The Development & Influence of the British Missionary Movement's Attitude Towards India, 1786-1830', Aberdeen, 1973. Only Davidson recognises the role of the Dissenters in the 'success' of 1813 and none discuss the significance for this campaign of the Dissenting struggle for religious toleration.
4. The popular side of this campaign has hitherto also not been examined.
5. R I & S Wilberforce, Life of William Wilberforce, 5 vols, London, 1838, IV, 10-23 and 94-126.
6. Wilberforce to Hardcastle, 15 Feb 1812 and Hardcastle to Wilberforce, 26 Feb 1812, Fathers and Founders, I, 366.
7. Copy letter dated 25 April 1812, in CUL Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 86.
8. See discussion Chapter 1, 37-39.
9. J H Pratt ed, Eclectic Notes 1798-1814, London, 1856, 97.
10. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 11-12.
11. Fuller to Ward, 7 Oct 1811, BMS MSS, H1/1.
12. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 14.
13. Wilberforce to Ryland, 3 June 1812, Bristol Baptist College MSS.
14. Wilberforce, Life IV, 10.
15. *ibid*, 12.

16. SPCK Minutes 1811-13, General Meeting, 5 May 1812, SPCK MSS.
17. London, 1805.
18. Pott to Wilberforce, nd, Bodleian, Wilberforce MS d.14, 124-7.
19. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 14.
20. A copy of the Resolutions voted on 23 June 1812 is held in the Sidmouth Papers, Devon County Record Office MSS C1812 OA.
21. Pott to Wilberforce, Life, IV, 22.
22. Resolution V.
23. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 15. Cunninghame of Lainshaw was a magistrate in Dingepore and held estates in the West Indies.
24. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 15 and Fuller to Marshman, 15 May 1812, BMS MSS, H1/2.
25. Fuller to Marshman, 15 May 1812, BMS MSS, H1/2.
26. H Pearson, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev Claudius Buchanan DD, 2 vols, Oxford, 1817, I, 281.
27. C Buchanan, Colonial Ecclesiastical Establishment . . ., London, 1813.
28. R Hall, Address to the Public on an Important Subject Connected with the Renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, London, 1813.
29. Fuller to Ward, 7 Jan 1813, BMS MSS, H1/1.
30. Commons Journals, 15 Feb 1813 and 19 Feb 1813, LXVII, 157, 181.
31. Fuller to Carey, Marshman and Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2. Liverpool was related to Ricketts and Prendergast, two of the missionaries' staunchest opponents.
32. Record of Interview 3 March 1813, contained in BMS MSS, East India Correspondence 1807-13, H2/Bound volume 5 and Fuller to Ward 5 March 1813, BMS MSS, H1/1.
33. Lord Gambier's record of his conversation with Lord Liverpool in CMS MSS, Committee Minutes 8 March 1813, I, 545-47.

34. Fuller to Ward, 5 March 1813, BMS MSS, H1/1.
35. 'Affairs of the East India Company Lords & Commons 1813', IOR L/Parl/2/57, 275-8.
36. Copy letter, H Thornton to Bowdler, nd, CUL, Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 100-104.
37. Fuller to Carey, Marshman & Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2.
38. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 105
39. Lord Liverpool's interview with the PSPRL is described in a letter to Mr Stephen, 30 March 1813. See also letter from PSPRL to Lord Liverpool, 1 and 26 April 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 230-231 and 240-43.
40. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 107.
41. Copy letter, H Thornton to Bowdler, nd, CUL Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 103.
42. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 109.
43. PSPRL to Liverpool, 1 April 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 242-3.
44. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 117.
45. *ibid*, 110-111.
46. PD 9 April 1813, XXV, 697-8. Cf Minute in the Wellesley Papers, BL Add MSS 37281, 176.
47. Toone to Hastings, 15 and 26 April, BL Add MSS 29188, 47-50, 58.
48. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 109-11.
49. *ibid*, 112-3.
50. *ibid*, 116.
51. Wilberforce to Harford, 8 April 1813, Bristol City Library, Harford MSS 28048.
52. Copy letter Thornton to Bowdler, nd, CUL Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 104.
53. 10 May 1813, LMS MSS, HO(E) 2/7/A.
54. Fuller to Sutcliff, 2 May 1813, BMS MSS, H2/Bound volume 2.



55. PSPRL to Liverpool, 26 April 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 240-241.
56. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 118. Josiah Pratt was secretary to the CMS and editor of the Missionary Register.
57. See Annex B to this chapter for the text of the religious Resolutions.
58. PD, 3 June 1813, XXVI, 562-3.
59. PD, 7 June 1813, XXVI, 555.
60. Pellatt & Wilks to Lord Liverpool, 19 June 1813, and Allen to Liverpool 21 June 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 263-266.
61. PD, 22 June 1813, XXVI, 827-873.
62. Wilberforce to Burder, 25 June 1813, LMS MSS, HO(E) 2/1/B.
63. Wilberforce, Life, IV, 122.
64. Allen to Liverpool, 21 June 1813, and Allen to Castlereagh June 1813, VMMS MSS, Box 664.
65. PD, 1 July 1813, XXVI, 1018-1082.
66. PD, 12 July 1813, XXVI, 1184-1196.
67. PD, 16 July 1813, XXVI, 1218.
68. Court to Bengal, 7 Sep 1808, contained in PP(East Indies), VIII (1812-13), 351-22.
69. PD, 1 July 1813, XXVI, 1033.
70. PP(East Indies), VIII (1812-13), 409-13.
71. PD, 5 April 1813, XXV, 553.
72. PD, 22 June, XXVI, 830.
73. PD, 1 July 1813, XXVI, 1040-41 and 1037-8.
74. PD, 13 July 1813, 1206.
75. PD, 9 April 1813, XXV, 696-7.
76. PD, 21 June 1813, XXVI, 792-3 for Lord Grenville; 13 May, XXVI, 105-6 for Lord Grey, and 16 July 1813, XXVI, 1217-8 for Lord Lauderdale.

77. PD, 2 June 1813, XXVI, 526.
78. PD, 1 July 1813, XXVI, 1081-2.
79. 15 May 1799 & 16 Sep 1811, LMS MSS, Board Minutes.
80. Wilberforce to Sidmouth, 20 May 1811, DRO MSS, Sidmouth papers C1811/OE.
81. Fuller to Carey, Marshman & Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2.
82. Copy letter Thornton to Bowdler, nd, CUL Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 75-78.
83. C H Philips, The East India Company 1784-1834, Manchester, 1961, 190.
84. I Bradley, 'The Politics of Godliness', 38.
85. 29 July 1813, BL Add MSS 29188, 181.
86. PD, 13 July 1813, XXVI, 1206.
87. Fuller to Carey, Marshman and Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2.
88. Allen to Castlereagh, 26 June 1813, WMMS MSS Box 664.
89. PD, 13 July 1813, XXVI, 1206.
90. See Appendix 5 for text of Sections 33 and 49.

## Chapter 7

### MISSIONS, DISSENT and PEOPLE: THE POLITICS OF PRESSURE

#### a. The Popular Appeal of Missions

The decision to include Resolution 13 in the Company's new charter was partly a response to the large number of petitions that poured into Parliament between April and June 1813. These petitions were a product of good organisation, energetic leadership and the fact that during the previous twenty years the missionary cause had captured the imagination of a growing section of the British public. As one would expect, the main support for missions came from evangelicals. Central to all evangelicals was the importance of conversion: the belief that the Christian church was a missionary church; that her *raison d'être* was mission, both at home and abroad. Evangelicals believed that non-Christians could not be admitted to the felicities of heaven and, for this reason, many were at one with Wilberforce in regarding Britain's failure to promulgate Christianity overseas as an even fouler blot on her national escutcheon than her involvement in the slave trade. A mark of the early nineteenth century evangelical was his belief in the urgency of the Biblical appeal to conversion.'

The growing religious awareness brought about by the Evangelical Revival was heightened by the unrest of the latter decades of the eighteenth century: the Wilkes agitation, the Gordon riots, the loss of the American colonies and, most dramatic of all, the French Revolution and its aftermath. Disasters were generally regarded as signs of God's displeasure. Few men at this time doubted that the world was of divine institution and many contemporaries believed the French Revolution heralded the approach of the Millennium, when men would be personally accountable to God at the final judgement for their actions on earth. Millenarianism had a close connection with the idea of missionary activity because of the belief that men must labour for souls in preparation for Christ's second Advent: "And the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." [Matt.24.14] A rash of new missionary societies were founded in the decade after the French Revolution, starting with the Baptists in 1793, and it is difficult to believe that the dislocation caused by the Revolution and its aftermath did not give an impetus to the missionary movement.

Expectations of the Millennium apart, the doctrine of Providence reinforced the belief that the gospel must be preached to all nations. In 1811 Melville Horne, an

Anglican cleric who had been in Sierra Leone, expressed a common belief when he stated:

At this hour, religion, PROTESTANT RELIGION, is the bulwark, shield, sword and glory of Britain, and if Providence has placed under her dominion the provinces of the distant East it is . . . that we may impart to them the blessed religion of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

The hand of God was seen in successes as much as in disasters. Evangelicals believed that India had been given to Britain for a higher purpose and that purpose was to propagate Christianity. It was believed that Christianity would not only lead to the spiritual salvation of the Indian people but would also improve their moral and material condition.

Another stream flowing into the river of missionary zeal was humanitarianism. Humanity and Christianity called together for missionary action when the evils of the slave trade, the 'barbarism' of the natives of the South Seas and the 'degradation' of the Hindu became widely known. Support for humanitarian causes reached entirely new levels during the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade. Evangelicals formed a particularly strong group in this campaign. Their belief that once something was seen to be wrong it could not be ignored, was a powerful stimulus to action. The anti-slave trade campaign, with its national network of associations and constant propaganda about the plight of these fellow human

beings, brought an awareness of the 'heathen world' to large numbers of people of all classes and can perhaps be said to have ushered in a period of 'Christian humanitarianism'.

The new missionary societies followed the example of the nation-wide anti-slave trade network and set up corresponding societies. Later fully-fledged missionary associations were established. These were deliberately set up as an efficient means for disseminating information and soliciting funds from large numbers of people. They often cut across denominational boundaries. By 1813 these could be described as a sort of national religious organisation. The methods through which people were roused to an interest in Indian missions will be discussed in detail in Section b. of this chapter.

Much of the debate on the spontaneity or manipulation of the missionary movement hinges on theories that evangelical leaders deliberately channelled their members' enthusiasm into missionary activity in order to deflect it from political radicalism at home. Bernard Semmel specifically makes this charge of the Methodists in his book The Methodist Revolution<sup>3</sup>. It is undeniable that evangelical leaders stressed to their followers the importance of accepting their lot in life and obedience to 'the powers that be'. In their attempts to gain

respectability in the eyes of the Establishment, denominational leaders pointed out the efficacy of their own branch of Christianity in aiding social stability. Nevertheless, evangelicals were not prepared to carry utilitarian arguments beyond a certain point. Wilberforce, in his Practical Christianity, was clear that 'vital' religion could not be simulated and that a church establishment could not be kept up in this "new age" by the "higher orders" using it to "retain the common people in subjection."<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, during the debates over the 'Pious Clause' in 1793, he had remonstrated with Hussey for considering "the Hindoo or Christian religion merely as a useful engine for the purposes of government."<sup>5</sup> The ultimate aim of evangelicals was to persuade the nation to turn to 'vital Christianity' for the salvation of their souls, not to provide a tool for the subordination of the masses. Where missions fitted into this aim, was that evangelicals fervently believed that concern for the heathen abroad could help revive Christianity at home. Charles Simeon explained their position in the following way:

It may be said, perhaps, Why are we to waste our strength upon the heathen? Is there not scope for the labours of all at home? I answer, It is well for us that the Apostles did not argue thus; for if they had not turned to the Gentiles till there remained no unconverted Jews, the very name of Christ would probably long since have been forgotten amongst men. Besides, the more our love abounds towards the heathen, the more will the zeal of others be provoked for the salvation of our neighbours; and the more confidently may we hope for the blessing of God upon their pious endeavours. Let then all excuses be put away, and let all exert themselves at least in prayer to the great 'Lord of

the Harvest', and entreat Him day and night 'to send forth labourers unto his harvest'.<sup>6</sup>

Once men were convinced that they had found the way to eternal salvation, many wanted to share it with others. They were also commanded to do so by the word of God. Such beliefs were reinforced by the thought that the Millennium might be at hand. These views were widely diffused among Christians of all denominations. The evidence does not, however, lead to a picture of a spontaneous movement from below as portrayed by Seymour Drescher for the anti-slave trade movement.<sup>7</sup> Enthusiasm for missions grew in the early years of the nineteenth century through the assiduous cultivation of the evangelical leaders. Missionary interest was fostered and directed but not forced, both from a concern for the plight of the heathen and from a concern for the state of religion at home.

Scots were particularly drawn to support missions in this period and their response illuminates the themes so far discussed in this chapter. Their contributions to English missionary societies formed a large part of missionary funds and put into the shade the missionary zeal of the rest of Britain. The particular interest in India can partly be explained by the strong links between Scotland and India. Many Company servants, including the prominent Charles Grant and Claudius Buchanan, were Scots. Other factors also seem to have been at work. As in England,



the French Revolution had a significant impact on Scottish religious life and particularly on enthusiasm for missionary activity. There was much interaction and interpenetration of evangelical and radical movements. Eschatological fervour was even stronger in Scotland at this time than it was in England. The cause of missions was stimulated by the idea of political freedom and even more by the ideal of humanity which proclaimed the common rights of man. The right to propagate Christianity was claimed as a natural right.<sup>2</sup>

Scottish Dissenting religious leaders, as in England, directed some of the religious enthusiasm of the time in this direction. In this sense, Semmel is correct in stating that missionary enthusiasm was 'channelled'. The missionary leaders needed money and men. In addition they wanted the freedom to work in accordance with what they regarded as God's commands. The massive petitioning movement of 1813 in favour of missions was organised both from a deep commitment to Christian duty and for narrow denominational reasons which will be discussed later in the chapter.

b. The Mobilisation of the People

i Publicity

The papers of the leaders of the missionary movement clearly show the carefully-laid groundwork and orchestrated action that led to the 1813 petitioning campaign in favour of missions to India. This campaign owed a great debt to the example and personnel of the anti-slave trade movement and the leadership of the Saints. However, it was also indebted to existing Dissenting organisations, especially the Committee of the Three Denominations, the Wesleyan Committee of Privileges, and the recently formed Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty [1811]. These groups were able to mobilise massive support quickly and were well-used to lobbying Parliament.

By 1813, through the efforts of the missionary societies, the religious public had come to a considerable awareness of the plight of the heathen throughout the world. A number of influential religious periodicals were started in the late eighteenth century which contained articles on India: the Arminian Magazine in 1771, the Evangelical Magazine in 1793, the Missionary Magazine in 1796 and the Christian Observer in 1802. The circulation of these periodicals was impressive. The Missionary Magazine noted in 1797 that there were more than 30,000<sup>copies of</sup> religious

publications printed every month in Britain. The monthly circulation of the Missionary Magazine itself was between 5-6000 copies. This is similar to the circulation of the Monthly Magazine, the Monthly Review and Gentleman's Magazine and considerably more than that of the British Critic and Critical Review. The religious periodicals were also cheaper than the secular, selling at 6d a copy instead of 1s.<sup>9</sup>

The most influential religious publication as far as India was concerned was the Baptist Periodical Accounts, which contained long extracts from the letters and journals of the Baptist missionaries in India. The Baptist missionary committee ensured that these were not only distributed to each Baptist church but also to anyone of influence they thought might be able to help. Many copies were distributed free. However, the Periodical Accounts harmed as well as helped the cause because the Baptist leaders, in their innocence, published details of opposition to conversion encountered by the missionaries. Sidney Smith made use of this information to belittle the Baptist efforts and to demonstrate that they were destabilising. While this harmed the cause in the short term, in the long-term the images of the degraded Hindu, and the horrifying practices of sati, hook-swinging and infanticide were those that remained in the public mind.

Another influential publication was Claudius Buchanan's Christian Researches in Asia, published in 1811.<sup>10</sup> This described his travels and findings on the state of Christianity in the East. Buchanan's account of Jagganath and the British collection of pilgrim taxes at idolatrous festivals captured the public imagination and nine editions of this work were issued in two years. The missionary lobby also made great use of the press. In 1813, the CMS ensured that accounts of the public meeting of 29 March were published in the Morning Post, Morning Chronicle, Times, Courier and in the Bristol, Birmingham, Norwich, Leeds and Leicester papers. Accounts were also published in other provincial papers. A full account of the proceedings was published in the Moderator, Observer, Guardian, Methodist Magazine, Evangelical Magazine, Panorama, and Missionary Register.<sup>11</sup>

Linked to the various articles published in the religious periodicals were missionary sermons, which reached a wider audience than publications alone could achieve. The annual missionary week in London was made into a festive occasion and was so popular that entry had to be restricted by ticket. In 1810, Buchanan claimed that there were 2000 people at the CMS annual meeting.<sup>12</sup> In addition to sermons in missionary week, the missionary societies sent out their best and most energetic speakers on fund-raising tours of the country. Collections were often very large and the

poor seem to have given freely. Missionary boxes were placed in Sunday schools and churches and penny-a-week and juvenile associations were formed to tap an even wider public. It was soon decided to consolidate this local interest by forming auxiliary missionary societies. The Baptists had made a small start at this with their creation of corresponding societies, affiliated to the BMS in 1793. A nation-wide Baptist Union was created in 1812. The LMS put its auxiliary societies on a formal basis in 1807. The CMS set up its association network in 1813. Although not strictly a missionary society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, founded in 1804 at the instigation of some of the LMS leaders, was very important. Its president was Lord Teignmouth and Grant was a vice-president. It was the most successful society in terms of support from all classes of society, including the aristocracy and episcopacy and auxiliary societies were formed from 1809. Juvenile and ladies' associations were also started but these were not put on an official basis until 1811, when the first official ladies' society was formed. The Bible Society's support of the Serampore translations brought an awareness of the Indian situation to an even wider public and encouraged many to support of more overt missionary activity.<sup>13</sup>

The auxiliary societies and associations were invaluable not only as channels through which to awaken more and more

people but also as a source of funds. By 1811, £6000 had been added to Bible Society funds by the exertions of auxiliary societies. CMS funds reached the £3000 mark for the first time in 1813, the year in which it set up associations. The following year £13,200 was received.<sup>14</sup> The CMS accepted contributions from both rich and poor. In its fourteenth annual report, it spoke of the "utility of allowing [the poor] to subscribe" because it "induces a habit of economy, "which so far as they are concerned, is of itself a handmaid to almost every other virtue."<sup>15</sup> Noting the success of these associations, the SPG and SPCK decided to follow suit and set up district committees, their equivalent of associations, from 1813.

The role of Scotland in providing funds for the missionary societies should not be overlooked. The papers of the LMS and BMS show disproportionate amounts coming from Scotland from the earliest days. Both societies sent regular fund-raising deputations there. One of Andrew Fuller's tours raised £2000 for the Baptist mission. Contributions came from the poor as well as the better off. An Edinburgh association of female domestic servants supported a catechist in India. Missionary fervour in Scotland was such that two missionary societies, the Glasgow and Edinburgh Missionary Societies were formed in 1796, affiliated to the London Missionary Society. Scotland's early support of missions, as in England, was the result of

the energy and encouragement of Nonconformist ministers such as Haldane, Greville and Ewing more than that of members of the Established Church.

#### ii The B&FBS: A Society for All?

By far the most successful society in attracting support from a wide spectrum of British society for the propagation of Christianity was the British and Foreign Bible Society formed in 1804. From 1809 auxiliary societies were formed at a great pace, very quickly establishing a nation-wide network and attracting many members of the Establishment. Its membership included Churchmen, Methodists and Dissenters, ministers and laymen, politicians, businessmen and aristocrats. It was even patronised by royal princes. Its success and failure in attracting support throws considerable light on the ambiguity of the attitude of many members of the Church and secular Establishment towards Dissenters and missionary activity. The missionary societies had been singularly unsuccessful in attracting the support of the higher echelons of society and the differences in approach between it and the overt missionary societies are instructive.

The idea for the British and Foreign Bible Society had originally been suggested by the directors of the LMS under the impetus of providing bibles for the poor at home.

The aim of the B&FBS was to disseminate Christianity by distributing the Bible without note or comment both at home and abroad. The founders of the society deliberately aimed at attracting the aristocracy and episcopacy to its ranks. For this reason they stressed that distributing the Bible was not missionary activity. Nevertheless, it was seen as

the safest, & easiest, & least expensive way of propagating Christianity in foreign & heathen countries. Missionaries cannot be sent in sufficient numbers to convert the continents of Asia, Africa and America. But the Scriptures may be dispersed through almost every part of them. The seed may be sown, and God, if he sees fit, will give it the increase.<sup>16</sup>

Large numbers of people believed in the utility of the Society. Some, like Nicholas Vansittart, believed that in the long term, cooperation between Church and Dissent would be "one of the most efficacious means of lessening both the political and religious evils of dissent." Vansittart did not want it to be said that "the DISSENTERS ALONE have carried the word of God to every nation under heaven". According to Rev John Owen, the B&FBS secretary, Vansittart also felt that if Churchmen withdrew from the B&FBS and left it to the Dissenters

"it would be fraught with inevitable mischief . . . because there can then be no check to any sectarian spirit which might introduce itself, and it must be unavoidably irritated by so harsh and I think, so unjust an indication of jealousy."<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Porteus admitted another reason when he wrote that in order to raise sufficient funds "it was necessary to take in all denominations of Christians in the Kingdom, as



well as members of the Church of England."<sup>18</sup> Others were induced to support the Bible Society for the same reason that they supported the Society for the Reformation of Manners, Sunday schools and Hannah More's cheap tracts. Even the most sceptical felt that religion had an important role to play in improving the morals and behaviour of the poor. The French Revolution and its aftermath seemed to indicate that an end to Christianity would lead to an end of public morals. Many saw the hand of Providence in the events that had occurred and feared that the Establishment in Britain would follow France if more respect for religion was not shown. The society was so successful in propagating its aims that it obtained Royal patronage and by 1810, eleven bishops and two Irish archbishops were subscribers. What is even more interesting is that members of the Society included Warren Hastings, Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh and Lord Moira. It was also patronised by Quakers, who as a rule held aloof from overt missionary activity.

This influential support was not, however, the whole picture. Other bishops and High Churchmen were virulently opposed to it. They feared and disliked the Bible Society's success and used what arguments they could find to discredit it. It was even argued that the Bible Society auxiliaries had been responsible for the petitions against Lord Sidmouth's 1811 bill against Dissenters. This was

not a fair accusation because these petitions were orchestrated through the Protestant Dissenting Deputies, the Wesleyan Committee of Privileges and the newly-created PSPRL.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1805 and 1822, more than 170 pamphlets were written against the B&FBS, most of these by High Church clergy, who argued that the Bible Society had set itself up in opposition to the SPCK. They objected to its interdenominational constitution and its effect on church order. They expressed great fears that Dissenters would gain control of the society.<sup>20</sup> On the contrary, however, the Dissenters held back and effective control was left in the hands of Churchmen. The Dissenters had no desire to 'kill the golden goose'. They could see that in order to gain widespread support and to get the patronage of the men who made the decisions in the country, the society should appear to originate with the Establishment. Both Church and Dissent had much to gain from the alliance and for this reason, it not only held but grew. The society's work was important for the Indian question because it supported the Baptist translations at Serampore and the work in India was reported to its members. It provided a largely acceptable way for Dissenters and Churchmen to cooperate in the task of propagating Christianity. In 1813, in line with its policy of remaining as uncontentious as possible, forced on it by the opposition of some High Churchmen, the

B&FBS did not officially take part in the campaign to open India to missionaries. However, many of its leaders and members were also active members of the various missionary societies and the Bible Society auxiliaries were one of the networks through which it was possible to reach the 'religious public'. The Swansea Bible Society, for instance, helped organise two petitions with a total of 1400 signatures [1200 on one and 200 on the other].<sup>21</sup> Perhaps its greatest value for the missionary lobby was that it provided a transitional stage for those reluctant to support overt missionary activity and helped many make the intellectual leap between the two.

c. Missions, Dissent and Government

The admission of missionaries into India was but one of a number of political issues in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which were at least partly concerned with the relationship of religious dissent with the 'Constitution in Church and State'. The most obvious issue was the Protestant Dissenting campaign to secure repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which reached a high point in 1811 with the failure of Lord Sidmouth's bill to tighten up the Acts.<sup>22</sup> The 'Catholic Question' similarly formed part of this debate. A worrying aspect of the American and French Revolutions had been the involvement of Dissenters on the side of civil liberty and

the 'rights of man'. The peace petitions against the war with France and the 1812-13 campaign against the Orders-in-Council also had a high level of Dissenting involvement.

The similarities between the anti-slavery campaign and the struggle to open India to missionary activity have often been pointed out. Both can be seen as moral crusades to ameliorate the plight of Britain's heathen subjects. Wilberforce was the parliamentary leader for both these issues and as early as 1806, had made the connection explicit in a letter to Lord Wellesley.<sup>23</sup> The 'pressure group' techniques used in both campaigns were similar: lobbying key ministers, involving the Established Church, adopting a high moral and religious tone, establishing a nation-wide network through which to disseminate information and to rouse the public to further action if necessary, and finally appealing to Britain's self-interest. In the case of the slave-trade, the lobbyists appealed to Britain's trading self-interest. In the case of missions to India, an appeal was made to both political and commercial interests. The missionary lobby argued that Christianity would both bind the ruled to the rulers and bring the inhabitants to a stage where they would want British exports. Support for the abolition of the slave trade was broadly-based. The humanitarian aspect of the issue was one which touched many people. Similarly, the picture painted by the missionary lobby of the utter

degradation of the Hindu was a powerful factor in gaining mass support for missions.

Another campaign largely directed by Dissenters was the peace campaign against the war with France. Supporters of the Peace Society believed that war was an act of human depravity which destroyed both life and trade. Like the slave trade and the failure to bring Christianity to Britain's heathen subjects, war was regarded by many as a national sin. Cookson points out that "it has never been properly appreciated that the same men who led the war opposition were also often the most forward in condemning the Orders-in-Council, the East India Company monopoly and the legal disabilities of Dissenters". There was great support from the chapel communities and Cookson cannot stress too much the importance of ministers in organising their congregations to support the cause. This parallels Hunt's conclusions on the importance of ministers in whipping up abolitionist support in Yorkshire and my conclusions on their importance for the missionary cause. The tactics of the 'Friends of Christianity and Humanity' also followed the example of the anti-slave traders: an organising committee in London, local and district meetings, general correspondence and circulars to elicit petitions.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps the movement with the closest affinity to the campaign for Indian missions was the 1811 campaign against Lord Sidmouth's attempts to tighten up the Test and Corporation Acts. The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, which was heavily involved in the missionary campaign, was set up in 1811 with the lofty aim of achieving the "repeal of every penal law preventing the complete enjoyment of religious liberty."<sup>25</sup> It was not coincidental that the society was formed in 'missionary week' 1811, nor that the directors of the LMS formed a large percentage of the founders. The colonial implications of the struggle for toleration were acknowledged and it was decided that copies of the petition against Sidmouth's bill should be circulated "throughout the empire".<sup>26</sup> Although open to all Protestants, membership was overwhelmingly Independent and Calvinist Methodist, probably because the Wesleyans had their own Committee of Privileges and the Baptists were in the process of forming their own Baptist Union. By May 1812, 600 congregations were affiliated to the PSPRL, 139 of them London congregations. This meant an efficient network through which petitions could very speedily be elicited.

The Wesleyan Committee of Privileges was also closely involved both in behind the scenes lobbying of government ministers and others in Parliament and in the public

campaign. The year 1811 had demonstrated how efficient the Wesleyan network was. Two thousand signatures were obtained in London in three days and within a week messengers had informed every circuit in the Kingdom. Within forty-eight hours 336 petitions were presented from congregations within 120 miles of London. The combination of the Wesleyans, the PSPRL and the Protestant Dissenting Deputies was powerful and achieved 700 petitions to Parliament in under a week with the signatures of over 100,000 adult males.<sup>27</sup> Correspondence from Dissenters to Earl Grey shows that only the time factor prevented many more petitions from flooding in to Parliament.<sup>28</sup>

In 1803, Alexander Knox, Castlereagh's private secretary, told him:

For a hundred years, at least, there has not been so much attention given to religious matters as is at this time by numbers in the middle ranks of society in England. Of these many are Dissenters, but many are also in the Establishment. Both descriptions are alike denominated methodistical. . . . Of this extended class the political importance is much greater than any one slightly informed respecting them can conceive an idea of. In the first place, they have a common sentiment, which, if engaged on the side of Government, would be an impregnable mass of strength; but, if unhappily revolted, alienated, or even chilled, the negative injury would be immense, to say nothing of positive bad effects.<sup>29</sup>

Parliament's response to the 1811 petitions demonstrates that important figures in the Establishment were not prepared to alienate this large body of 'respectable' citizens. The Dissenters themselves were convinced that the 1811 petitions had an electric effect on Parliament.

Fuller wrote that "our Churchmen are ready to die of fear." He attributed this to the "astonishing influx of petitions which made it seem "as if half the nation had arisen" and even carried the Archbishop of Canterbury along with "the tide of public opinion."<sup>30</sup> The petitions frightened the Archbishop who maintained in the House of Lords that he was "sure that coercion was not only impolitic but impracticable" in this case and pointed out that "the very basis of toleration depended on abstaining from the attempt." Lord Liverpool similarly questioned whether the object sought by the bill was not worth "the inconvenience arising from the agitation and alarm that had prevailed since the measure had been before the House."<sup>31</sup> The success of the Dissenters in 1811 in stopping Lord St~~am~~mouth's Bill was a high point for non-Anglican morale and demonstrated the aggressive spirit of Dissent when it felt its vital interests were at stake. The confidence gained by this victory led Dissenting leaders to carry on the battle to repeal various aspects of the Test and Corporation Acts.

The right to send missionaries and ministers to India and for their work there to be unhindered by Company officials was considered to be part of this battle. The success or failure of the Dissenting demands would also have important implications for the work of Dissenting missionaries throughout the Empire. Dissenting



missionaries were experiencing difficulties elsewhere in Britain's possessions in obtaining government support and protection for their work. In South Africa, the Afrikaners strongly objected to the 'Hottentots' being taught Christianity and the LMS on several occasions appealed to the British governor for help and protection. As in India, governors were cautious. In 1810, for instance, Lord Caledon refused permission to Vanderkemp "to attempt a mission to the Tanbookers on account of the present state of the colony" but "did not object to his proceeding westward within the boundaries of the colony."<sup>32</sup> Vos of the LMS was ordered to leave Ceylon in 1807 "at the instigation of some Dutch consistory", whom he had offended by his zeal. Another missionary was ordered to leave Colombo.<sup>33</sup> In Sierra Leone a Baptist missionary came into conflict with the Anglican chaplain, who considered himself to be the "pastor of the whole colony", whether Churchmen or Dissenters. Grigg, the missionary concerned, was a great trial and disappointment to the Baptists. He upset Macaulay, the governor, by stirring up trouble with his democratic principles and selling alcohol. He eventually became a slave trader. Porteous, the Church of Scotland clergyman who had caused so much trouble for Haldane, took great pleasure in informing Henry Dundas in 1797 that the Sierra Leone settlement had been "almost dissolved by a democratical missionary."<sup>34</sup>

The greatest difficulties for Dissenting missionaries were experienced in the West Indies. In 1802 the Jamaica Assembly passed an 'Act to prevent Preaching by Persons Not Duly Qualified by Law'. In justification, it maintained that there existed an evil,

which is daily increasing, and threatens much danger to the peace and safety therefore, by reason of the preaching of ill-disposed, illiterate, or ignorant enthusiasts, to meetings of negroes and persons of colour, chiefly slaves, unlawfully assembled, whereby not only the minds of the hearers are perverted with fanatical notions, but opportunity is afforded them of concerting schemes of much private and public mischief.<sup>35</sup>

As a result of the Act, Dissenting places of worship were closed and several Dissenting preachers were thrown into prison. The Methodists and Dissenters in England immediately reacted to this trespass of their legal 'toleration' and asked Wilberforce for help in lobbying the Government. In 1804 they discovered that the offending law was to be replaced by one making the local magistrates "judges of a call to preach the Gospel." Joseph Butterworth, the Methodist solicitor, told Gutteridge of the Committee of the Three Denominations that this "would be most destructive to religion there" because it meant that "no person is to preach unless the civil power think it proper and necessary and if at any time it is thought proper to silence those who have been qualified, this may be done!" Butterworth felt the Dissenters should encourage "pious people to unite in a grand effort to promote the cause of Christianity in a general way." However, he also

greatly feared that "party men" would use a public struggle to further their own "carnal" ends and so "deeply wound" religion.<sup>36</sup> Fuller, also felt that calling out the public would do more harm than good, telling Sutcliff that "the minds of men are sooner influenced by private application." Both Fuller and Butterworth were prepared to address the King on the subject if necessary.<sup>37</sup>

Jamaica was not the only West Indian colony to cause trouble for Dissenting missionaries. Wray, the LMS missionary in Demerara, was informed that the Demerara 'Court of Policy' was determined to expel him from the country.<sup>38</sup> In 1811 the situation deteriorated still further when the governor issued a proclamation forbidding the negroes from assembling for worship between the hours of sunrise and sunset, which effectively prevented them from receiving religious instruction.<sup>39</sup> Dissenting leaders lobbied members of Government in private letters and interviews, pointing out the respectability of their preachers and how their work "contributed in no small degree to the peace and safety of the British Empire." They also, with the help of Wilberforce and Stephen, besieged the Colonial Office "about the persecuting edicts in Jamaica and Demerara".<sup>40</sup> They were successful in persuading, Lord Liverpool, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, to order the repeal of one of the 'obnoxious' laws.

While there are important differences in the examples mentioned above, one factor is constant. The primary concern of the British government was the political stability of its possessions. It was very cautious about the introduction of Christianity and listened to the fears of white settlers in the West Indies and South Africa, who feared that Christianity might bring with it demands for political liberty. In India, officials feared more the unrest that might be unleashed because of the deep attachment of Indians to their own religions. Tracts came under particular suspicion. Apprehensions about the Baptist tracts in India have already been discussed. In February 1813, Lord Liverpool censured the LMS for an unsuitable tract which had found its way to Demerara.<sup>41</sup>

When the missionaries were regarded as ill-educated and fanatical Dissenters whose political loyalty to the Establishment could be challenged and who seemed to be impinging on the rightful place of Anglican chaplains, a useful weapon was at hand with which to attack them. Church/Dissent rivalry was an important component of the missionary struggle in both the West Indies and India. Nor was it absent in mainland America. The SPG had been set up as much to counter Dissenting influence amongst the colonists as it had been to propagate the Gospel amongst the Indians. The first colonial Anglican episcopate was established in Nova Scotia in 1787. Pressure behind its

establishment was at least in part due to the desire to ensure that the Church of England would make greater headway than the Dissenters. The first bishop, Inglis, was an ardent High Churchman.

By 1812, the Dissenters had suffered almost continuous harassment in the West Indies and to a much lesser extent in India. Missionaries were unable to go about their work without restriction if the local authorities deemed it necessary in any British territory. The attempts of Anglican magistrates and others to restrict the activities of Methodists, Dissenters and Evangelical Churchmen in the early years of the nineteenth century pulled these groups together to fight to ensure that their place in the Protestant Constitution was acknowledged and secured. The question of missions abroad was the extension of this question to the imperial scene. It raised the question of not only whether Christianity should be preached but of what Christianity should be preached. The renewal of the Company's charter was a timely opportunity to establish the principle not only that the Legislature had a positive duty to promulgate Christianity to Britain's heathen subjects, but also to assert the right of all Protestant denominations to propagate it without the control of the secular authorities or the Church of England.

On 24 April 1812 the Protestant Dissenting Deputies considered just this point and decided to lobby Parliament to obtain "legal security" for Dissenting missionaries to go to India.<sup>42</sup> The hope was that, once the point was gained, the principle would be extended to all British dependencies, not just India. The 1813 renewal of the Company's charter was a very important test for the Dissenters and one which aroused as much emotion and determination to protect their 'rights' as the 1811 campaign against Lord Sidmouth's attempt to tighten up the application of the Test and Corporation Acts.

The 1811 success gave the Dissenters a feeling of confidence and demonstrated that even the House of Lords was unwilling unnecessarily to alienate such a large body of 'respectable' citizens. By 1813 Lord Liverpool's administration was feeling its way towards some kind of broad accommodation with Dissent. The aim was to bring 'respectable Dissent' into a cooperative relationship by giving it a stake in society without conceding anything vital to the Church of England. What this stake should be was a matter for negotiation with the leaders of Dissent and their patrons like Wilberforce. The petitions played an important part in this system of 'negotiation'. They were to some degree at least a warning light for public order, which was a real concern for governments in the 1810s. The French Wars were still going on and the Luddite

riots were a recent memory. Government was under siege from demands for parliamentary reform, religious toleration for Catholics and Dissenters, peace and various economic issues. The Dissenters formed a large group in society, economically and, increasingly, politically powerful. Lord Liverpool had come to the conclusion that 'inclusion' not 'exclusion' was the way forward in government's relationship with Dissenters. Inclusion would keep the Dissenters quiescent and, in his view, make it easier to control their activities. Liverpool regarded as politically blind those who favoured exclusion. For this reason, he regretted the line which many of the "dignified clergy" and others took over the Bible Society. As he told Wilberforce in 1820,

considering the numerous religious sects into which this empire is divided, it was an object in my opinion to unite them into one focus . . . for the circulation of the Scriptures . . . it would have been much wiser for the Bishops to have placed themselves at the head of these institutions, than to have run the risk of their falling entirely into the hands of Dissenters.<sup>43</sup>

d. The Petitioning Campaign, April-June 1813

Between April and June 1813 nearly 900 petitions signed by half a million people were presented in the House of Commons in support of the principle that Britain had a duty to propagate Christianity in the areas under her control, and that all denominations of Protestants had the right to

participate in fulfilling their duty.'<sup>44</sup> Through the missionary press, sermons and newspapers, a large section of the British public had been made aware of the degradation of the Hindu and of the importance of the issue of 'religious freedom' in access to India. The missionary and Dissenting religious organisations provided a formidable network through which to rouse the public to action. The surviving correspondence of the key evangelicals allows us to reconstruct much of the detail of how this feat was achieved.

The petitioning movement began in earnest on 13 April. Similar numbers of petitions were presented to the House of Lords. A number of points emerge from an analysis of the Commons petitions<sup>45</sup> A detailed breakdown of these petitions is included at Appendix 6.

1. Most petitions [438] came from the 'inhabitants' generally of towns, villages and parishes.
2. The 'friends and supporters' of the Baptist mission in India were the most energetic single group with a total of 281 petitions.
2. The Missionary Society [LMS] came next with a total of 84.
3. There were 36 petitions from Scotland, including general petitions and petitions from the Church of Scotland and Dissenters.
4. The remainder came from Wesleyans and Dissenters generally. [50]
5. There is no discernible geographical pattern.



6. There was only one petition from the Church Missionary Society. In addition, only five petitions mention purely Church of England involvement.

The emphasis of the existing secondary literature on the activities of the Saints and the CMS conceals the importance of Dissenting involvement in the campaign. The petitions seem to reflect the urgency of the cause for the groups involved. The Baptists, who sent in nearly 300 petitions, had been active in India the longest, employed more missionaries than the LMS and SPCK in India and had experienced more restrictions in carrying out their work than anyone else. The Missionary Society, which was mainly a Congregational organisation, despite its non-denominational constitution, was also very concerned about the future for its missionaries in India, particularly when, by June, it seemed clear that licences would continue to be required for missionaries. The Church of Scotland felt that it had a right to cater for its many church members in India. The petition from its General Assembly did not even mention missionary work.<sup>46</sup> The small number of petitions specifically from Wesleyans seems to indicate that they were included in the general petitions because the correspondence of their leaders shows clearly that they were concerned and that they were actively lobbying government.

The previous chapter briefly touched on the organisation of the petitioning campaign. The Saints controlled the parliamentary side. Thomas Babington seems to have been responsible for receiving the petitions and getting them ready for presentation. However, according to Henry Thornton, Zachary Macaulay was the "real agent, who has written his circulars and receives these petitions in answer."<sup>47</sup> Approximately 100,000 of these papers were circulated.<sup>48</sup> Wilberforce was characteristically energetic, writing to friends and acquaintances, urging them to start petitions.

The tactic of presenting 'general' petitions seems to have been agreed at the massive meeting of friends to missionary activity held at the City of London Tavern on 29 March. By 'general' it was meant that the prayer of the petitions should apply to all denominations of Christians and not restrict itself to any particular group. A General Committee in London for Promoting the Introduction of Christianity into India was formed with Zachary Macaulay as its treasurer. The first task of this committee was to draw up a circular to send to "some minister in every city and town throughout the Kingdom, to urge them to get petitions forwarded in aid of the general object."<sup>49</sup> The committee was also responsible for 'managing' the presentation of the petitions by putting them into the hands of "such members of the Commons as were the

representatives of the petitioners and such Lords as possessed estates in their neighbourhood." Committee members sought interviews with those who were to present the petitions "endeavouring to impress their minds in their favour."<sup>50</sup>

The example of the petitioning for the abolition of the slave trade seems to have been at work here. Wilberforce a few days before this had written to John Scandrett Harford of Blaise Castle, Bristol, suggesting to him that as "the petitions for abolishing the Slave Trade were very general and very useful: why not on this occasion also?"<sup>51</sup> Wilberforce urged another friend who had organized anti-slave trade petitions and seems to have lived near Huddersfield, to do the same again and to ensure that "the petitions should be from each place separately."<sup>52</sup> Wilberforce also wrote to prominent Methodists and Dissenters, telling them how greatly he feared that nothing would be done at the renewal of the charter unless there was "a clear expression of the voices of the friends of religion in this country."<sup>53</sup>

Wilberforce had another strong reason for wanting the petitions to be as general as possible. He confessed to the Huddersfield friend that he felt

another consideration strongly. The Methodists and Dissenters will, I doubt not, petition; but let it not be said that they only take an

interest in the happiness of mankind, and that the members of our Church are not as zealous when there is a real call for such exertions.<sup>54</sup>

Wilberforce knew that petitions had to be phrased as uncontentiously as possible in order to get any support from the Established Church. After Castlereagh's declaration on 22 March that the Government intended to provide a bishop and archdeacons for India, Wilberforce had another obstacle to overcome for it seemed that otherwise sympathetic Churchmen felt that this would automatically open the way for Church of England missionary activity and that no further action was therefore needed.<sup>55</sup> On 31 March Wilberforce wrote again to Harford, reiterating the importance of phrasing the petitions in general terms, not pointing to particular measures. Wilberforce recommended that Harford use the 1793 'pious clause' as a model.

In an attempt to obtain as wide support as possible, a great effort was made to appeal to humanitarian feelings so that the petitions would be signed by as many as possible to prove how widespread support for the measure was. Wilberforce seems to have suggested this tactic and he advised Harford

of the importance of obtaining as many as possible of the friends of humanity who may not agree with us in religious sentiments. All surely will join who do not wish to see such a vast body of our fellow subjects . . . sunk in the greatest moral and social and domestic

barbarism without an effort to raise them on the scale of beings . . . the more general the terms of the petition, the better.<sup>56</sup>

The extent of cooperation between the Saints and the Methodists and Dissenters is not entirely clear. They were certainly in frequent communication. The Saints gave advice on tactics and the wording of the petitions and masterminded the presentation of the petitions in Parliament. They were behind the organisation of the public meeting on 29 March at which the superintending committee was set up.

However, the Dissenters and Methodists also acted on their own initiative. The PSPRL, the Dissenting Deputies and the Wesleyans all lobbied Parliament and urged their members to send petitions. In April 1813, the PSPRL decided to put pressure on Lord Liverpool by informing him that they could not repress the public interest of their country constituents, who would not be satisfied unless they could express their opinions to Parliament through petitions. Furthermore, in line with the decision of the general meeting on 29 March, they informed Liverpool that both Houses would be petitioned from "the inhabitants of many towns, not as congregations, or religious communities, but in their civil character".<sup>57</sup> On 9 April T Thompson, the Methodist MP, wrote of the energy of the Methodists in London and his hopes "that the Methodists and all other

religious persons will unite in petitions to both Houses of Parliament for liberty to carry the blessings of Christianity into India".<sup>58</sup> The Baptists appointed their own committee of twenty-six, which included the MP, B Shaw, to meet every night at 6 pm to consider the progress of the day.<sup>59</sup> The Baptists had been intending to send in two types of petitions, one from "places" and the other asking for their own particular needs. They kept to this policy but fell in with the decision of the 29 March meeting by wording their petitions so that they would include all denominations of Christians. The Baptists were particularly keen to be seen to do this as they did not want to be criticised as the Church Evangelicals had been for seeming to overlook this principle.<sup>60</sup> The Missionary Society on the whole seems to have been content with general petitions but in early June started to send in petitions on their own behalf. The probable reasons for this will be discussed later in the chapter.

Each society held public meetings, announced in advance in the press, to consider the wording of the petitions and to arrange for their signature. Subscriptions were commenced to provide the necessary funds for the nation-wide campaign. Copies of the approved petitions were then sent to all the congregations connected with the individual societies. The proceedings of these meetings were

announced in the press. Petitions were left in a variety of places for signature. The petition approved at the London Baptist meeting was left for a week at the bar of the New London Tavern Cheapside for signature.<sup>61</sup> The CMS petition was left at the houses of Josiah Pratt, the CMS secretary, and Thomas Smith and C B Seeley.<sup>62</sup>

The campaign was just as energetic in the provinces and, unlike in London, where laymen organized the tactics, local clergymen were the lynchpins. The role of ministers of religion in stirring up interest in missions and persuading their congregations and other contacts to sign petitions cannot be overstressed. Meetings were advertised in the local press. In Edinburgh the Chair was taken by the Lord Provost; in Glasgow by one of the magistrates, in Portsmouth by the Mayor. The Northampton meeting, attended by "the gentry, clergy and others," was held at the Guildhall and the petition was left there for a week for signature. Lord Spencer presented the Northamptonshire petitions in the Lords and Lord Althorp and John Cartwright the petitions in the Commons. Other petitions were kept in the local church or chapel for signature. Some were kept at private houses, such as the Manchester petition which achieved the "approbation of the associated clergy" and was available for signature at Messrs Clarke, Harrop [a newspaper proprietor] and Mrs Richardson. The meetings seem to have been attended by both sexes. Petitions were

signed in hundreds of tiny villages as well as the larger towns.<sup>63</sup> The actual responsibility for the petitions from inhabitants generally is difficult to establish but it seems that, on the whole, they were 'ecumenical ventures' and that the credit for them should not go to any one denomination.

The involvement of the Church of Scotland in the campaign, like the involvement of the Church of England, was ambiguous. We know that, as early as March 1812, Wilberforce was breakfasting with Cunninghame of Lainshaw in the hope that he would promote interest from the General Assembly of the Church.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, Philips mentions that Wilberforce persuaded the Church of Scotland to take the lead of the Nonconformists.<sup>65</sup> We also know that in 1796 the Church of Scotland had serious doubts about the utility of foreign missionary activity.<sup>66</sup> The General Assembly did indeed petition Parliament in 1813 but the concern of the petition was for the right to send Church of Scotland ministers to provide for the needs of their European adherents in India. There was no mention of missions to the heathen in this petition.<sup>67</sup> The main concern of the SSPCK petition sent a few days later was also to "afford the advantages of religious work and instruction to our countrymen" although this petition incidentally mentioned that they also wished to be able to "impart the benefits of Christianity to the natives of



India". Petitions expressing a greater concern for missionary activity were sent by some of the Church of Scotland synods such as those of Fife and Glasgow and Ayr.<sup>69</sup> The Scots signing the more general petitions would have been partly influenced by the humanitarian aspect of the campaign. Scotland had more than proved her humanitarian zeal in the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade.

There was certainly cooperation between Church and Dissent in Scotland over the missionary question but there is little evidence to support Church of Scotland leadership. Up to 1813, the Church of Scotland had been almost antipathetic to missionary activity and evidence points to a continuing dynamism from Scottish Dissenters rather than members of the Church of Scotland. Even Thomas Chalmers was roused to action in 1813 by a Baptist.<sup>70</sup> One example of how the petitions were organised is the Glasgow petition. Greville Ewing, a Baptist minister, first had an address by Robert Hall, the Baptist, reprinted in the form of a circular and given as much publicity as possible.<sup>71</sup> Then Dr McGill, a Church of Scotland minister, along with "Dr Balfour and others" drew up an address requesting attendance to sign a petition to both Houses of Parliament for "free and peaceable admission of missionaries, as well Dissenters or Church people into India." The petition was available for signature for approximately three weeks.

The writer of the letter [probably James Deakin, a Baptist] assured Fuller that "there are thousands in cold Scotland who most heartily bid you god speed and wish you success."<sup>71</sup>

Because so few of the petitions survive [I have found eighteen.], we know little about the numbers and types of people signing them. However, a letter from Col Sandys, enclosing two Cornish petitions states that they reflected the opinion of the tin miners in general. We also know that there were 1200 signatures on a Swansea petition and 3000 on a Baptist petition from Liverpool.<sup>72</sup> It seems that whole towns and villages supported the cause in some cases and there is little doubt that it commanded wide support.

One important characteristic of the groups who organised the petitioning to Parliament in 1813 was the fact that, without exception, they felt excluded from India. Church Evangelicals and Methodists had no missionaries in India and the Dissenters had found themselves unable to go out in Company ships and felt restricted once they got there. The Church of Scotland had neither an ecclesiastical establishment nor missionaries in India. The opportunity to rectify this on the occasion of the renewal of the Company's charter gave the campaign a dynamism and urgency, particularly for Methodists and Dissenters, that it probably would not otherwise have had. By 'toleration',

Methodists and Dissenters meant 'right'. The language of their petitions was the language of the 'rights of man'. Religious liberty was equated with civil liberty. Missionary activity was therefore regarded as an 'inalienable right' which must not require licence from "any human authority" nor depend for its continuance on "human caprice".<sup>73</sup> Methodists, Dissenters and Church Evangelicals all felt that Christianity was the only religion not to be 'tolerated' in India by the Company. These men were not, however, only worried about a general 'toleration' for Christianity in India but also what kind of Christianity was to be tolerated - that of the Established Church or that of all Protestants. They had already experienced difficulties from the attitude of some of the Company chaplains in India and feared that, once an Anglican bishop was established, the situation would become worse. For this reason, they regarded the clause setting up an Anglican episcopal establishment, unaccompanied by any general provision, with great suspicion. Dissenters were also concerned about the repercussions on toleration in England.<sup>74</sup> It is hard to escape the conclusion that, for many of the petitioners, the fate of the 'perishing Hindu' was distinctly secondary to such questions of toleration or rights.

The aim of the petitions was to put pressure on the Legislature to do something for Christianity while not

alienating it by this expression of outside pressure. To this end, the petitions were carefully phrased, stressing loyalty to government, pointing out the utility of the measure both for the Company's European employees and the Indians, stressing that no coercion would be used and concentrating on the depraved condition of the Hindu, thus appealing to 'Christian humanitarianism'. These were all arguments Grant had used in 1786 and 1792.<sup>75</sup>

The wording of the petitions tells us as much about the groups presenting the petitions as it does about the avowed aims of the petitioners. The petition from the Dissenting Deputies to the Commons on 9 April stressed the efficacy of Christianity in establishing the "fabric of social order" and maintained that "to represent a system of idolatry and superstitions as equally tending to produce moral virtue and human happiness was no less contrary to the dictates of sound reason and philosophy than irreconcilable with the first principles on which our faith is built." The Protestant Dissenting Deputies, the elite of 'Old Dissent', had established their respectability in the eyes of the Establishment and did not want this jeopardised by espousing radical measures. Their aims were therefore very moderate, merely expressing the hope that "persons of the various professions of Christians, as may be disposed to devote themselves to the promulgation of Christianity in India, may under certain conditions [my underlining] be

permitted to enter that country." In other words, 'let us not allow too many cobblers and tailors in.'<sup>76</sup>

This was far too vague and restrictive for the PSPRL, the LMS and the BMS, who greatly feared that any conditions other than promises of prudent behaviour once in India, would be used to exclude them. They were part of 'New Dissent', which still had some way to travel on the road to respectability. Its members generally did not have the education and background of 'Old Dissent' and tended to come from artisan backgrounds, the same classes who formed the mainstay of the political radicalism of the time. Its preachers ignored the established rules of parish boundaries. The Missionary Society, perhaps remembering the opprobrium heaped on Bogue and Haldane, seems to have felt particularly vulnerable to the accusation of involvement in political radicalism. It took care to point out to Parliament that, their missionaries "receive full instruction on the great Christian principles which form good and peaceable subjects, and useful members of civil society. It stressed that the petitioners were "most firmly attached to the constitution of this country, and ardently desirous of its true prosperity, dignity and perpetuity."<sup>77</sup> This is very much the language of a society feeling itself under threat, grasping for acceptance and respectability and fearing that, if licences were required

for missionary activity, their missionaries might very well be debarred.

e. Trade and Christianity: An Alliance Against Monopoly?

An obvious partnership in 1813 was the two parties hammering to be let in at India's door: traders and missionaries. The Saints and many of the Methodists and Dissenters outside Parliament were practical and successful businessmen and large numbers of missionary supporters in the country were engaged in trade. The ubiquitous Wilberforce was certainly not blind to the potential advantages of such a partnership and, in February 1812, wrote in his diary that those interested in the cause of religion would probably be compelled "to join the great body of commercial & political economy men . . . who will I doubt not contend for destroying the monopoly of the Company, and leaving the road to the East Indies free and open."<sup>76</sup> Claudius Buchanan, also believed that trade and Christianity could be connected in men's minds. At the 1810 CMS anniversary meeting he told his audience of "bankers, businessmen and well-to-do London citizens that when Britons carried the Gospel to foreign parts, when they brought their message of kindness to the Indian people, the Indians would stretch forth their hands and receive the Gospel and commerce together."<sup>77</sup> Even Charles Grant saw the connection, and in his Observations of 1792 wrote

that "moral improvement [of the Hindu] would lead to economic improvement and help our commerce."<sup>10</sup>

Both Philips and Embree speak of cooperation from the outports but without providing satisfactory references for this. Philips mentions that Wilberforce sought the assistance of the deputation from the outports and Embree states that "the northern manufacturers responded willingly to the plea for missionary support."<sup>11</sup> It seems that the outports gave little support. A letter from Fuller explains that the deputies from the outports were in London to campaign for an ending of the Company's monopoly on trade to India in July 1812 but that they were not only "careless about religion but careful to avoid it, lest it be a clog which might impede their other designs."<sup>12</sup> Although Spencer Perceval and Lord Buckinghamshire had promised the outports that both the import and export trade would be opened to the principal British ports, the deputies did not want anything to jeopardise this. In 1813 Liverpool and Bristol were the only ports to petition in favour of a 'pious clause' and even then the petitions were from members of the LMS, Methodists and Baptists rather than from the people generally.

It is difficult to assess the extent of the cooperation from northern manufacturers. Judging by the petitions received in the Commons, it was not very much. There were

no petitions solely from manufacturers or traders. Only five petitions, all of them from Scotland, mention manufacturers or traders. It seems that the best one can say is that trading support lies hidden amongst the supporters of missionary and religious societies generally. There were petitions from the major industrial towns including Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Derby, and Sheffield and many manufacturers and traders must have signed the petitions.

The parliamentary debates show a somewhat different side to the relationship between trade and Christianity in 1813. Of course, the Saints had a difficult line to tread. On the one hand, the initial impetus for the increase in missionary activity had come from Charles Grant who, in 1813, was unequivocally against the ending of the Company's monopoly, fearing that the opening of India to unlicensed adventurers would be disastrous for commercial, political and religious reasons. In addition, the Clapham Sect did not want to antagonise the Company, which would probably retain its political power in India and which had at least gone some way in helping missionary activity and acknowledging the sobriety and character of the missionaries already there. On the other hand, the Evangelicals could not afford completely to antagonise the traders because much of the support for religious causes came from the business community.

---



The Evangelicals in the Company and parliament believed that trade had not improved India and that to open the trade to all comers would ensure that "far the greater number would be adventurers of desperate or needy circumstances", whose behaviour would lower the European in the eyes of the Indian and whose self-interest would lead to oppression of the 'native'. There had been examples enough of injustices and cruelties perpetrated on native peoples, the most dramatic of which was, of course, the slave trade. Missionary supporters, therefore, took care to stress the respectability of missionaries and how their work would add to social stability in India, in order to set them apart from 'mean and licentious' traders.<sup>83</sup>

The leaders of the missionary cause were ambivalent towards possible links between trade and Christianity in 1813 and on the whole regarded it as a separate issue from the question of the Company's monopoly. Even the PSPRL informed the Court of Directors that it was "solicitous to avoid all interference, as to the great political and commercial contest."<sup>84</sup> In Parliament, speeches regarding the trading monopoly did not mention the religious resolutions and missionary supporters only used arguments about trade to strengthen their own position; either to show how respectable missionaries were in comparison with the general run of trader, or to show that the promulgation of Christianity would help commerce in the long-term. Even

the quotations taken from Wilberforce, Buchanan and Grant seem to rise more from tactical considerations than from a firm belief that there were natural links between the prosecution of trade and the promulgation of Christianity.

A comparison of the number of petitions sent into the House of Commons in favour of ending the Company's control of Christianity and those sent in favour of ending the Company's control of trade in India is instructive. Between 21 December 1812 and 12 April 1813, a total of 123 petitions were presented on the commercial question. This includes both supporters and opponents of the Company's monopoly. The 897 petitions presented in favour of Christianity were of a completely different order and amounted to the greatest number of petitions ever presented to Parliament to that date. Contrary to popular belief, fewer petitions were presented to Parliament in 1814 against the continuance of the slave trade.

f. Conclusion

The massive petitioning campaign of 1813 was not a spontaneous movement even if sympathy for the missionary cause was genuine and widely diffused. People were roused to action by the energy of committed men, most of whom were Dissenters. The tactics were carefully thought through and energetically pursued by those who felt their interests

were at stake. The provinces would not have been aroused to any great extent without the zeal and determination of Dissenting ministers. The usual emphasis on the role of the Saints in the campaign conceals much. This is not to deny that they were important.

Two themes to the petitions emerged. One was the humanitarian aspect of the utter degradation and hopelessness of the Hindu under his religious practices. This gave the petitions a very wide appeal and linked the cause with anti-slavery. It also enabled the Church of England to support it. This was vital for the Parliamentary battle. The second theme was Methodist and Dissenting claims for 'toleration', which tied the missionary cause to the agitation against Lord Sidmouth's bill in 1811.

Hitherto, the 1813 petitioning campaign has been regarded simply as a straightforward struggle against the Company to obtain permission for missionaries to enter India. This was, of course, important and the rhetoric of the leaders dwelt on it. However, more general Dissenting claims focusing on domestic grievances were just as important. More than half the petitions were specifically from Dissenting groups, praying for 'toleration' for their own missionaries and ministers. Correspondence confirms how important this was to the groups involved. It gave the

petitioning campaign a dynamism and urgency it would not otherwise have had, Biblical appeals to conversion notwithstanding.

The effect of the petitions on the Government was discussed in the previous chapter. On 22 March Lord Castlereagh's resolutions did not take into account the wishes of the missionary lobby. It is not clear whether this was a genuine oversight or a definite ploy on the part of Government. Whatever the reason for the omission of Resolution 13, it would probably not have been included in the end without some expression of strong public feeling on the matter. The Government was persuaded to include it in its bill and sufficient numbers in the Commons and Lords decided to vote for it, or at least not to vote against it. This success was important psychologically for the missionary lobby. It also helped give the movement respectability and standing in society and was crucial for future fund-raising and recruitment.

It was, however, a limited political victory. The principle that Britain had a duty to provide for the religious improvement of India had been admitted and both sides accepted that this was a code meaning the propagation of Christianity. However, the campaign was a failure from the point of view of Dissenting claims for 'toleration'. Missionaries continued to require licences from the

Government, if no longer exclusively from the Company, and they remained at the mercy of Company officials once they had arrived in India. No provision was made for Dissenters to minister to their members in India. The new episcopal establishment meant that missionaries would now probably be controlled by the ecclesiastical as well as the secular establishment. What induced Dissenters to accept these limitations was that they feared they might lose what little had been gained by alienating Government by pressing for even more. The petitioning campaign had been a great moral demonstration and the Dissenters could accept what had been achieved without losing face. They decided to wait and see how events would turn out in India.

### Notes to Chapter 7

1. See, for instance, J Van den Berg, Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Enquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period 1698 and 1815, Kampen, 1956; E A Payne, The Church Awakes: The Story of the Modern Missionary Movement From Britain in Modern History, London, 1942 and M Warren, The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History, London 1965.
2. Proceedings of the CMS, III (1810-12), 201.
3. B Semmel, The Methodist Revolution, London, 1974. See also E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, London, 1968 Penguin edn.
4. W Wilberforce, A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in this Country Contrasted With Real Christianity, London, 1797, 407-8.
5. The Senator or Clarendon's Parliamentary Chronicle, VII, 24 May 1793, 858.
6. cited in H C G Moule, Charles Simeon, London, 1952 reprint, 93-4.
7. S Drescher, Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective, Basingstoke, 1986.
8. W M Kirkland, 'The Impact of the French Revolution on Scottish Religious Life and Thought with Special Reference to Thomas Chalmers, Robert Haldane and Neil Douglas', unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 1951; H W Meikle, Scotland and the French Revolution, Glasgow, 1912; D Mackichan, The Missionary Ideal in the Scottish Churches, London, nd.
9. For circulation figures, see R D Altick, The English Common Reader, London, 1957, 392.
10. C Buchanan, Christian Researches in Asia, Cambridge, 1811.
11. CMS Committee Minutes, 17 May 1813, II, 11.
12. E Stock, The History of the CMS, 4 vols, London, 1899-1916, I, 112.
13. For a very detailed discussion of the methods used to arouse the public see A K Davidson, 'The Development and Influence of the British Missionary Movement's Attitude towards India 1786-1830', unpublished PhD thesis, Aberdeen, 1973.

14. E Stock, History of the CMS, I, 476.
15. Proceedings of the CMS, IV (1813-15), 283.
16. Beilby Porteus' 'Occasional Memorandums and Reflections on Several Subjects Principally Religious, Morale, Ecclesiastical, and Literary, begun in the Year 1777', 20 July 1805, Lambeth Palace MSS 2101, 113.
17. J Owen, The History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 3 vols, 1816-20, II, 147-8.
18. Porteus, 'Memorandums and Reflections', 20 July 1805, 108.
19. T Kemp to B&FBS, 15 April 1813, B&FBS Home Letters 1804-13, B&FBS MSS. For a full discussion of this struggle see M B Whittaker, 'The Revival of Dissent (1800-1835)', unpublished MLitt, Cambridge, 1959.
20. A collection of these pamphlets is held in the B&FBS MSS.
21. Sandys to Wellesley. 20 April 1813, WMMS MSS, Box 664.
22. This will be discussed in some detail later in this chapter.
23. Wilberforce to Wellesley, 14 April 1806, BL Add MSS 37309.
24. J E Cookson, The Friends of Peace, Cambridge, 1982. Cf the opinions in Drescher's Capitalism and Antislavery.
25. Whittaker, 'The Revival of Dissent', 134.
26. *ibid*, 125.
27. *ibid*, 120, 127.
28. Brunton to Grey, 28 May 1811, DUL, Grey MSS.
29. Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, ed by his brother, 4 vols, London, 1840, IV, 290.
30. Fuller to Ward, 7 Oct 1811, BMS MSS, H1/1.
31. PD, 21 May 1811, XX, 242 and 233.
32. LMS Minute Book 5/6, 23 July 1810, LMS MSS.
33. Reports of the Missionary Society from its Formation in the Year 1795 to 1814 Inclusive, London, 1814, 217.

34. H Thornton to Fuller, April 1797, BMS MSS, H2/Bound Volume 1.
35. 'Papers about Persecution Arising from the Act of Assembly 1802', contained in BMS MSS, H4.
36. Butterworth to Gutteridge, 3 May 1804, BMS MSS, H4.
37. Fuller to Sutcliff, 10 May 1804, BMS MSS, H2/bound volume 4.
38. LMS Minute Book 3/4, 25 July 1808, LMS MSS.
39. LMS Minute Book 5/6, 12 Aug 1811, LMS MSS.
40. W Smith to Gutteridge, 24 Oct [?], BMS MSS, H2/Bound Volume 4.
41. Peel to LMS, 10 Feb 1813, LMS MSS HO(E) 3/1/A.
42. Bernard, Lord Manning, The Protestant Dissenting Deputies, Cambridge, 1952, 431.
43. Liverpool to Wilberforce, 26 Sep 1820, BL Add MSS 38287, 272-8.
44. The Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle, XXI (1813), 321-3.
45. The petitions are listed in Commons Journals, LXVIII (1813). See Appendix 6 for a breakdown of the petitions, excluding the two presented from the Church of Scotland and the SSPCK in February.
46. *ibid*, 15 Feb 1813, 157.
47. Thornton to Bowdler, nd, CUL Add MSS 7674/1/L5, 75-8.
48. M J Holland (Viscountess Knutsford), Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay, London, 1900, 297.
49. Burls to Fuller, 30 Mar 1813, BMS MSS, H2/Bound volume 3.
50. Fuller to Carey, Marshman and Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H2/2.
51. 25 March 1813, BCL, Harford MSS.
52. Wilberforce to [?], 25 March 1813, R I & S Wilberforce, Life of William Wilberforce, 5 vols, 1838, IV, 105.



53. Wilberforce to Clarke, 30 March 1813, Wilberforce House MSS, Hull.
54. 25 March 1813, RI & S Wilberforce, Life, IV, 105.
55. RI & S Wilberforce, Life, IV, 106-7.
56. Wilberforce to Harford, 31 and 25 March 1813, BCL, Harford MSS.
57. PSPRL to Lord Liverpool, 26 April 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 240-3.
58. Thompson to [?], 9 April 1813, Manchester University, Dr Rylands Library MSS, MAM.PLP.106.3.32.
59. Evangelical Magazine, XXI (1813), 188.
60. Fuller to Sutcliff, 29 March 1813 and Burls to Fuller, 30 March 1813, BMS MSS, H2/Bound volume 2 and H1.
61. Evangelical Magazine, XXI (1813), 188.
62. *ibid*, 192. See the Baptist Magazine (1813), 302-3 for a list of 241 Baptist petitions, signed by 51,142 people.
63. *ibid*, 221-3 for Edinburgh and Glasgow; Cowdray's Manchester Gazette, 8 May 1813 and the Northampton Mercury, 2,3 and 10 April 1813.
64. R I & S Wilberforce, Life, IV, 15.
65. C H Philips, The East India Company 1784-1834, Manchester 1961, 189. Philips' references are incorrect. I have not come across any evidence to substantiate this statement
66. See the discussion in Chapter 2, 61-62.
67. Commons Journals, 15 Feb 1813, LXVIII, 157.
68. See for instance, PD, 27 April 1813, XXV, 1084-5 & 1092-3.
69. W J Roxborough, 'Thomas Chalmers and the Mission Church with Special Reference to the Rise of the Missionary Movement in Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis, Aberdeen, 1978.
70. R Hall, An Address to the Public on an Important Subject Connected with the Renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, London, 1813.
71. Deakin to Fuller, 8 April 1813, BMS MSS, H1/1.

72. Sandys to Wellesley, 20 April 1813, WMMS MMS, Box 664; Kemp to B&FBS, 15 April 1813, B&FBS MSS, and Fuller to Hope, 24 May 1813, BMS MSS H10.
73. PSPRL to Liverpool, 1 April 1813, BL Add MSS 38410, 242-3.
74. undated and unsigned note in Allen's handwriting, WMMS MSS, Box 664.
75. See Chapter 1.
76. PD, 9 April 1813, XXV, 764-5.
77. PD, 14 April 1813, XXV, 817-8.
78. R I & S Wilberforce, Life, IV, 14.
79. Cited in G D Bearce, British Attitudes Towards India 1784-1858, Oxford, 1961, 82.
80. C Grant, 'Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain . . . .', printed in PP (East Indies), X (1812-13), 141.
81. Philips, The East India Company, 189 and A T Embree, Charles Grant and British Rule in India, London, 1962, 274.
82. Copy letter Fuller to Hinton, 16 July 1812, AL MSS.
83. PD, 28 April 1813, XXV, 1092-3.
84. 11 May 1813, IOR L/Parl/2/57, 275-6.

## Chapter 8

### THE WALLS OF JERICO: MISSIONARIES AND INDIA, 1813-1833

#### a. The Court of Directors

The religious public in Britain had raised its voice and Parliament appeared to have listened. However, it was not Parliament but the East India Company which had to put the new Act into effect. India was many thousands of miles away from supervision and the vague wording of Section 33 of 53.Geo.III.c.155 left much to the Company's discretion. In legal terms very little had changed. The power to grant licences remained with the Court of Directors, who also had the power to declare certificates and licences void "if it shall appear to them that the persons, to whom they have been granted, have forfeited their claim to countenance and protection".[Section 36] Missionaries were not specified in the Act and the caveats that the Company retained the right to control the activities of Europeans in the interior and that Indians were to continue to enjoy the free exercise of their religions, left the way open for Company officials to restrict missionary activity. The position of the missionaries on paper had advanced only in as much as statutory provision was made for an appeal to the Board of Control if the Directors refused to grant a licence.

The Court's actions at the end of 1813 seemed to indicate that it was adopting a more helpful stance towards licensing missionaries and the first CMS missionaries and a Baptist were duly licensed to proceed to India. However, the Court's draft despatch granting these licences was altered by the Board of Control in an unexpected way. The Court, in its draft, had used the phrase 'as missionaries'. This was crossed out by the Board, leaving the more ambiguous phrase 'for the purpose of introducing among the natives useful knowledge and religious improvement'.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it was this that gave the Court the courage the following year to refuse a licence to the Baptist, William Yates.

There is no evidence to suggest that Yates was an undesirable character and so one can only assume that the Company was testing the water in refusing his application. The Court's refusal was overruled by the Board of Control and from that time there are no instances of the Court refusing to grant a licence to a missionary. This must therefore be regarded as a success for the missionary lobby. Nevertheless, as late as 1820, the missionary societies were not sure of the reaction of the Court of Directors and Butterworth, the Wesleyan MP, advised the WMMS to approach the present chairman quickly because the next chairman of the Company was known to be "decidedly unfriendly to missions".<sup>2</sup>

The routine licensing of missionaries did not, however, mean that the Court of Directors was prepared to allow them to act without restriction in India and caution remained the keynote of all its despatches concerning missionary activity. The four missionaries still in India who were under orders to leave waited in suspense to see the effect of the new charter on their cases. In an attempt to avoid deportation, the Americans, Nott and Hall, had fled to Bombay, where they were fortunate that the new governor, Sir Evan Nepean, was sympathetic and did all he could to help. Nepean told them that he would not send them away "unless he thinks himself under the necessity of doing it from his connection with the General Government who are of late taking a decided stand against missionaries."<sup>3</sup> Nepean was in an extremely difficult position. His sympathies were with the missionaries, yet he was under strict injunctions to send home all unlicensed persons. Despite the Americans' flight from Bombay in October 1813, Nepean gave good testimonials of their character and usefulness. The role of Thomas Thomason at Calcutta was also critical. He persuaded both Lord Minto and Lord Moira that there would be no harm in leaving the missionaries in India until the decision of the Court of Directors was known.<sup>4</sup> This decision gave the missionaries another two years' grace because the Court did not respond until March 1815.

The Court's eventual despatch seemed to fly in the face of the spirit of Section 33. It "entirely approved" of Minto's conduct in ordering home the missionaries who had "clandestinely got out to India on an American ship."

Because of Sir Evan Nepean's favourable testimony, the Court was prepared to leave the final decision on the fate of the American missionaries to the discretion of the governor-general. However, as in the past, missionaries' continued residence in India was to be dependent upon their good behaviour. The governor-general was therefore enjoined to "keep a strict watch over the behaviour of these persons" and "in the event . . . of any impropriety occurring in their conduct" immediately to "withdraw protection from them".

May was permitted to remain in India both because he had replaced Forsyth and was not therefore increasing the overall numbers of missionaries and because the inhabitants and Forbes, the commissioner of Chinsurah, had petitioned government to allow him to stay. As for Lawson, the Court was "induced to overlook the objectionable mode of his getting out to India, and permit of his remaining there under the care of Mr Marshman because he [Lawson] has it in his power to render to science, and towards perfecting a knowledge of the Chinese language . . . ."

This was a talent that could well be useful to government. After drawing the governor-general's attention to the

relevant sections of the new charter, the despatch concluded with the statement that "no persons must in future be allowed to enter or remain in any part of the Company's possessions without producing a certificate, agreeably to the said act . . . ." The Court justified the inflexibility of this injunction by going on to state that such "precaution" was "no less necessary to protect the character of the real missionary, than to prevent improper persons from settling in the Company's territories."<sup>6</sup>

This despatch, two years after the evangelicals' so-called success of 1813, was the harshest produced by the Court of Directors against missionaries working in India and the first specifically to mention missionaries in connection with the requirement for licences. Even the 1808 despatch in reply to Minto's misgivings about missionary activity had taken care to reiterate a belief in the benefits to be received from the propagation of Christianity and had warned the governor-general not to interfere with missionaries unless it was absolutely necessary for public tranquillity. Charles Grant felt so strongly that the proposed despatch was too severe that he had his objections minuted. He believed the Company was trying to deter other missionaries from entering India and contrasted its treatment of them with "the supine inattention of many years under which the illicit ingress of other adventurers into that country has so greatly swelled the European

population." He reminded the Court of the feeling at home on "subjects of this nature" and was of the opinion that all strictures in the despatch "proceed upon a very erroneous view of the subject and ought to be omitted". This time, however, Grant was not able to repeat his 1808 success in mitigating the severity of the Court's despatch and it was sent unaltered.<sup>6</sup>

Over the next twenty years a number of religious issues were brought to the Court's attention for advice and decision. One of the first of these was the apprehension of Marriot, a Bombay magistrate, that rumours circulating in the Bombay area that the government was trying to procure conversions by offering pecuniary rewards would unleash unrest. The Court's reply emphasised that such fears were groundless and expressed annoyance that it did not know of the existence of the auxiliary Bible Society that had recently been set up in Bombay. It stressed that this society must

in deference to the prejudices and feelings of the natives, most explicitly and unequivocally disavow the remotest intention of interfering, in any respect, with the religious opinions of the natives, and declare, that to such only, as voluntarily desire it, the sacred volume is offered.<sup>7</sup>

The differences in attitudes between the Board of Control on the one hand and the Court of Directors on the other, on the policy to be observed with regard to 'interference



in Indian religious customs' is clearly shown in the official correspondence. The Court tended to reinforce the cautious line of most local officials and did not hesitate to take issue with the Board of Control when it tried to alter its recommendations on religious matters, particularly after 1830 when the younger Charles Grant, as ardent an Evangelical as his father, became president. One example is the Court's remonstrance to the Board's alteration of a political despatch to Madras about the involvement of Christians in Hindu festivals. While the Court acknowledged that the practice of Christians being forced to draw idol cars was objectionable, it felt very strongly that in "a question involving the abolition of an ancient usage . . . connected with the religious sentiments of the people . . . the language of strong recommendation" should be used to end the practice, rather than that of "positive command".<sup>6</sup> Another example was the Court's fears of the results of the Board's intention to ensure that the Syrian Christians in Travancore would live in "perfect security" by placing them under the "special guardianship" of the Company and securing all their "rights and privileges by treaty." This suggestion appeared to the Court to be "pregnant with evil consequences", implying "a species of interference, which has no example in the history of our intercourse with other states in India" and is irreconcilable with the Board's assurance that the Travancore government will be exempt from interference.

The Court went on to point out the effect on a population almost wholly Hindu and Muslim, "when they observe a small community of Christians under a Hindu Government, selected for favors of so extraordinary a kind . . . ." In 1831, the Court refused to receive a CMS deputation about the civil disabilities of converts. Nevertheless, that year, no doubt under the influence of the Board, it sent a despatch saying that there was no objection to Christians being appointed as "Munsiffs or Vakeels". It was not, however, prepared to order the army to keep Christian converts within its ranks and left discretion over this to commanding officers.<sup>10</sup>

Governors in India and the Court of Directors were particularly nervous of the effect of Company officials doing anything that could be regarded as constituting a connection between government and missionary activity. Indeed officials were expressly instructed to refrain from such actions and any instances that came to notice were severely censured. Thus, governors would not give donations for direct missionary work although they would contribute to educational and charitable schemes.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Company chaplains were supposed to look after the European population and not to act as missionaries. Munro in Travancore was told that he could not employ Christian missionaries as judges. An assistant judge was passed over for promotion by Lushington, the governor,

after permitting missionaries to distribute tracts among Indian convicts. Lushington thought the judge in question, Waters, was "a dangerous enthusiast in matters affecting the religion of the native inhabitants".<sup>14</sup> The Court was horrified to discover that James Scott, the commercial Resident in Rungpore, with the connivance of Bayley, the Chief Secretary of Bengal, proposed to set up a mission, with the missionaries paid by government. The Bengal government was severely censured for having passed "no animadversions" on this proposal "as it was perfectly well known that we would not engage in schemes for attempting to propagate Christianity among the natives".<sup>15</sup>

The Court's attitude to the newly appointed bishop for India followed the same principle: it was not prepared to allow him unrestricted rights over all aspects of ecclesiastical policy. As early as 1816, the Court made it plain that it would retain the "right of appointment to Ecclesiastical offices" and censured the governor-general for allowing the bishop to appoint Company chaplains to stations. This the Court regarded as a matter of lay patronage and therefore not in the realm of spiritual jurisdiction.<sup>16</sup> The Board of Control occasionally softened the language of the Court's despatches regarding the jurisdiction of the bishop but nevertheless supported its basic stance that the Company must retain the right to

determine where chaplains should be stationed and to forbid any actions that appeared to threaten political stability.

b. The Evangelical View

Here we have unfurled the banners of the Cross, laid seige to the enemy's fortress and hope soon to compell him to abandon some of his positions. We have drawn our swords and are determined to use them to place Jesus . . . on his throne in this land.'<sup>6</sup>

The missionaries regarded themselves as 'soldiers of Christ' whose job it was to storm the citadels of 'heathenism'. They had not been winning this battle before 1813. Baptisms were pitiably few and there was evidence of outright opposition to their efforts from large numbers of Indians.'<sup>6</sup> In addition, the Company had not given them the support they felt was their due. Despite the rhetoric of victory after the inclusion of Section 33 in the Company's new charter, the missionary leaders had serious misgivings about the future. Fuller told Carey, Marshman and Ward that the bill had not remedied the evils of the requirement for licences and the possibility of expulsion once in India.'<sup>7</sup> The WMMS was also concerned about this and particularly feared that Company officials would not allow them to minister to European Methodists in India. The CMS worried whether the new bishop would make life difficult for them. In India itself, Carey had no illusions about the terms of the charter and told Fuller that "our going

into the interior depends as much upon the rule of Government as before." While he believed that Lord Moira, the new governor-general, was personally favourable to missionary activity, he feared that others "high in office" were not so. Carey was probably thinking particularly of Ricketts, the Chief Secretary to the Bengal government who was a nephew to Lord Liverpool and brother-in-law to Prendergast, the scourge of the missionaries in Parliament.<sup>18</sup>

In the 1813 debates over the renewal of the Company's charter, William Wilberforce had emphatically denied both that missionary activity had caused any tumults and that the missionaries had been objects of "universal jealousy and even antipathy". On the contrary, he maintained that the Protestant missionaries in India were not only the "most esteemed, but the most beloved and popular individuals in the country" and that "the natives were so tolerant and patient in what concerns their religion, that even the grossest imprudence could not rouse their anger".<sup>19</sup> Chapter 3 demonstrated that this was patently not the case for the period before 1813. Missionaries far more often met with abuse and violence than with grateful thanks for their redeeming message.

The following discussion will show that antipathy to the missionaries and their converts became more violent and

abusive after 1813. While it is not the place in this thesis to discuss the interaction between the missionaries and the peoples of India, it is important to know what missionaries and Company officials thought was happening because this affected their perceptions of the role government should play in protecting converts and furthering the progress of Christianity. Missionaries quickly became only too aware of Indian hostility and they drew the conclusion that they depended as much as ever on the active good will of the Company servants as they had before 1813. Company officials, with few exceptions, decided that extreme caution was required in their dealings with missionaries. The study begins with an examination of the situation in Bengal. It then looks at the Bombay presidency and concludes with the Madras presidency. Three areas in the Madras presidency have been given detailed attention: Travancore and Tinnevely, adjacent territories, both of which were early centres of Christianity and Mysore, a state that had long been under Muslim domination until the British placed a Hindu raja on the throne in 1799.

c. Bengal Presidency

As Carey had foretold, the Company continued to exercise its right to determine where missionaries would be allowed in the interior even after the 'pious clause' had been

included in the new charter. Despite Calcutta's long acquaintance with missionaries, the work was no easier there than in the towns and villages of rural Bengal. The missionaries themselves preferred to be in Calcutta because of the attractions of city life. Of seventy-one stations in 1833, less than ten were any appreciable distance from Calcutta. Gogerly in 1821 describes how he and Trawin went out every evening into the highways and market places to preach. Although some interest was shown, he found that

not unfrequently, we have to bear the reproach of the cross, & are called to hear the blessed name of Emanuel blasphemed & cursed, whilst we, his servants, are laughed and jeered at, & accounted as mad, & are saluted with showers of dust and stones.<sup>40</sup>

Little seemed to have changed from the early days of Carey, Marshman and Ward.

This hostility to the missionaries confirmed local officials in the Company's long-held opinion that a very cautious line should be adopted in any religious matters. Official caution extended to the use of the Scriptures and religious books in schools run by missionaries, which was a contentious matter even amongst the missionaries themselves. The basic rule was that if the school was funded by the missionaries, Company officials usually left it up to them to decide whether or not to use the Scriptures. If the school, however, received government

funding, the Scriptures were not usually allowed. May, who started the Chinsurah schools which gained the patronage of the Bengal government, decided that it would be counterproductive to try to use the Scriptures, both because it might make life difficult for him with Government and because of the difficulties it would pose in attracting Indians to his schools. The LMS directors were unhappy with this and in 1822 suggested a petition to the governor-general requesting permission to use the Scriptures in their schools. Mundy advised against it, pointing out that Bayley, the secretary to the Bengal government had repeatedly told them not to attempt it because "strict injunctions" had been laid on them by the Court of Directors.<sup>41</sup> It seems that complaints were made about the use of passages from the Proverbs and Thomason, the chief chaplain in Calcutta, reported to the CMS that "orders were given to discountenance the use of those boards, lest umbrage should be taken by the Brahmins". The CMS also wanted to start schools but was told to wait until the result of the "experiment" with May's schools was known.<sup>42</sup> Jabez Carey in Ajmer was similarly forbidden to use the Scriptures or any other religious tracts in his schools because Rajputana was newly conquered territory. Lord Hastings told Jabez' father that rumours were circulating that this was "only a prelude to introducing Christianity among them and then getting their children to Calcutta for sinister purposes."<sup>43</sup>



May found that he met with "many impediments" from native teachers, both those in his employ and others, "whose interest it is to spread reports prejudicial to the plan on which I teach." There was also some hindrance from parents and even from the children. May stated that the "grand difficulty is a fear of being made converts to Christianity."<sup>24</sup> In 1816 May was still encountering strong opposition and even the children were being beaten up. Like Henry Martyn in the Agra area in 1807, he found that the trouble was "chiefly from the old teachers and those who protect them." May stated that he found a general lack of respect for the post of teacher and difficulty in getting the teachers he employed to institute his plan. Opposition was so great in Bansbaria that he had to move the school. The children were beaten and May himself was threatened.<sup>25</sup> The school in another village was broken up by the zamindars of the village and the teacher was beaten. May believed that this was done at the instigation of the old teacher. Yet while all this opposition was occurring, there was the paradox of scarcely a month passing without a request for another school. Indians wanted the education but they did not want the Christianity. In 1818 Pearson, in his official report to the Bengal government on the state of the schools, stated that the natives suspected a "political object in view". He had the honesty to admit that, although it was "contrary to their nature to believe the missionaries would want only their good, they are not

entirely mistaken" in suspecting a political end, for the missionaries hoped that Christianity would forge bonds of attachment between rulers and ruled. Pearson envisaged the children forming "our army of reserve", ready to stand in defence of Britain's interests in India.<sup>46</sup>

Hill and Gogerly, the LMS missionaries in Berhampore in 1826-7, experienced similar problems to those in Chinsurah. Parents withdrew their children where Christian books were used and the missionaries' preaching was interrupted.<sup>47</sup> Opposition was more direct to the attempts of the Hills to use the Scriptures in their schools at Berhampore. Hill told the LMS that many respectable natives were alarmed and tried to get a pundit to make false translations and traduce the character of the schoolmasters. A disturbance was created at Mrs Hill's school and the military commander appealed to. Mrs Hill had to give up the land on which her school was situated.<sup>48</sup> Similar opposition occurred when the Hills tried to set up schools in Benares. Two years later they were forced to give up their Persian and Hindustanee schools because the Muslims would not send their children, as they were "frightened that their children would become acquainted with the principles of Christianity."<sup>49</sup> Adam, another LMS missionary at Benares, also insisted on using Christian books and also experienced considerable opposition. Despite the opposition, neither

man would budge from the principle of using the Scriptures in schools run by missionaries.

By 1828 Indian opposition to missionary activity seems to have become more virulent. The 11th report of the LMS Bengal Auxiliary Missionary Society stated that "many of the Christian converts were suffering severely from their adherence to Christianity from the zamindars." Zamindars were increasingly refusing to renew leases to Christians, particularly in areas where the missionaries appeared to be making some progress. The report specifically mentioned the persecution of converts at a village where "their houses [were] destroyed, their gardens pillaged, their granaries plundered and even the rice cut down."<sup>30</sup> The home of a Christian was burned down and the Christians reading the Scriptures inside were attacked by a mob with swords. Four were severely wounded. The missionaries believed that the attack had been set up by the zamindars, allegedly for secular reasons but in reality because of the men's conversion to Christianity.<sup>31</sup> Christian converts also found that they were were falsely accused of debts and refused the services of money-lenders and barbers as a punishment for breaking caste. A convert in Howrah was even murdered.<sup>32</sup> The missionaries themselves were not exempt from threats to their lives and occasionally Indians petitioned government against the missionaries' activities. The late 1820s and early 1830s seems to have been a time of

considerable ferment in Bengal. Several missionaries wrote of the "excited mind" of the people" and this period of the 'Bengal Renaissance' has been much discussed by scholars.<sup>33</sup> The 'excited' spirit of the times was probably partly due to Bentinck's abolition of sati in 1828. The WMMS came to the conclusion that the difficulties were too great to overcome in Bengal for the time being and closed their Calcutta mission down.

Company officials were nervous that such manifestations of discontent might reach a stage where they seriously threatened political stability. The great fear of the Company was that Indians would connect government with missionary activity. The actions of some of the Evangelical Company chaplains who came out in increasing numbers after 1813 made such a connection a valid accusation. The CMS correspondence shows how very close the alliance was between the chaplains and the society. Some chaplains undoubtedly regarded missionary work as part of their duties in India. Corrie made this explicit when he told a friend that more chaplains were needed because

their situation would enable them to promote most effectually and least ostentatiously the knowledge of Christianity among the natives. Their official character . . . prevents the least suspicion of design on the part of the natives so that they receive a copy of the Scriptures as a favour and are only afraid lest their anxiety after information should be deemed obtrusiveness . . . .<sup>34</sup>

The Company's worst fears seemed to come to fruition when one of its chaplains converted a brahmin, a naik in the 25th Regiment of native infantry. The commanding officer complained to the Bengal government, saying that the conversion had caused consternation, threatened good order and was hindering the regiment's recruiting. The Bengal government intervened and the convert's pay was suspended and he was eventually dismissed. Fisher, the chaplain responsible for the conversion, feared that, had he been a missionary, he would have been sent out of the country and that it was only his official position that saved him. It is unlikely that Fisher would have been expelled because, throughout this period, even those missionaries who committed similar 'misdemeanours', were permitted to remain in India.<sup>35</sup> The Company, however, was extremely apprehensive of any proselytisation amongst its sepoys and it was usually forbidden. The opinion of officials that sepoys had to be treated with extreme caution seemed to be vindicated after the 1824 mutiny of the 47th Regiment at Barrackpore, although religious controversy does not seem to have been at issue.

Missionaries had found that they were not even safe from Company interference when they were under the patronage of a native government. In 1814-5 the Begum of Sardhana was forced to dismiss John Chamberlain from her service after Charles Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi, had received a

complaint from the local military commander, Col Patton, that Chamberlain had been preaching at fairs in Delhi and Hardwar. Patton had expressed "dreadful apprehensions of the public minds being disturbed in this country" by Chamberlain's actions. Metcalfe agreed that there was danger and wrote to the Begum informing her that if she continued to retain Chamberlain she would be no "friend to government." Chamberlain made representations against this, in his opinion, unwarranted pressure to the governor-general. Lord Moira supported Metcalfe, telling Chamberlain that "he was not permitted to come into this part of the country to insult the prejudices of the people as [he] notoriously had done." Eventually the Begum bowed to the pressure and Chamberlain was sent from Sardhana. The opposition to Chamberlain's activities was, however, limited and the Bengal government had no objection to his settling in the lower provinces. It was only in the troubled western and northern provinces that restrictions were imposed.<sup>36</sup> Chamberlain, predictably, was not happy with these restrictions and in 1815 told the BMS that there would be no improvement in the situation for missionaries in India until "the Board of Controul or royal authority imposes."<sup>37</sup>

Opposition from military commanders proved to be a recurring problem for the missionaries and there are numerous examples of missionaries being forbidden to preach

in military cantonments. This opposition was based on two factors. The first was an antipathy to Dissent. The last thing military commanders wanted was democratic notions being spread amongst their soldiers, European or otherwise. Mr Lawrence, the acting judge at Dacca, expressed a common view when he told the Baptist missionary, Leonard, in 1816 that "Dissenters are like a set of miners rocking under the foundations of the church which will soon come tumbling down, and carry the state along with it."<sup>38</sup> At a number of military stations soldiers were restricted from attending Dissenting chapels except when the military chaplain was away. Carr, the senior chaplain in Bombay, caused great problems for the Wesleyans by his attitude and actions. Although missionaries usually managed to get restrictions based on antipathy to Dissent removed on representation to the presidency governments, such views on the part of the military were not entirely without foundation even after 1813. In 1816, Mead, the LMS missionary destined for Travancore, was nearly sent home immediately on arrival. On the voyage out, he had refused to drink the King's health and, on being challenged, had said he "should have no objection to drink 'Confusion to Royalty'".<sup>39</sup>

The second factor in which the views of the military played a large part was concern for internal security. Military commanders were not happy about conversions to Christianity because of the excitement these aroused among

the troops and the local Indian populace. They put pressure on the presidency governments and in 1814 the Bengal government issued an instruction prohibiting the circulation of the Scriptures in military stations. As a result of the instruction, commanding officers at Allahabad and Cuttack confiscated the books of the missionaries and prohibited them from preaching.<sup>40</sup> Smith, the missionary at Allahabad, was even taken into custody for a short time. Government caution reached its extreme when sepoy converts to Christianity were dismissed the service.

The governors-general concurred in the cautious line adopted by most Company officials towards missionary activity. Contrary to the opinion expressed by Michael Laird in his book Missionaries and Education in Bengal, this also applied to Lord Hastings. Although Hastings made encouraging noises to missionary leaders on first going out to India, his main interest was education and not conversion. Lord Hastings' refusal to support Chamberlain when Metcalfe engineered his dismissal from Sardhana has already been discussed. In addition, Hastings would not permit the scriptures to be taught in government-aided schools. In 1821 he refused the Bishop of Calcutta's request for an ordinance forbidding the employment of native workmen on Sundays. He felt that such a law would do violence to the religious habits of Muslims and Hindus and would be connected in Indian minds with the recent



appointment of the bishop. Hastings feared "the alarm might spread throughout the provinces and pointed out that "the peaceable acquiescence in our rule . . . had been always attributed (& we believe justly) to this forbearance"<sup>41</sup>

Other governors-general followed a similar line. In 1825, Lord Amherst overruled his Council and refused a government grant to a female education society on the grounds that the government had hitherto avoided connecting itself with any society established for the purpose of promoting Christian education."<sup>42</sup> In 1830 a Company chaplain was forbidden from "frequenting the lines of the native soldiery attended by a converted Musselman, with religious works and tracts for distribution."<sup>43</sup> Thomason, as early as 1814 had not been impressed with the "timidity" of the Bengal government, which he thought was "excessive". He told Pratt, the secretary of the CMS, that "our men of power here dare not rise to the act of Christian benevolence, until the momentum be at the seat of Government, from the British Parliament."<sup>44</sup> Lt Stewart, who was responsible for setting up schools in Burdwan, went so far as to say in 1818 that the government had been "inimical" to missionary activity.<sup>45</sup>

The CMS had hoped that the new episcopal establishment would smooth the way for their missionaries. The last-

minute misgivings of Wilberforce, however, proved to be only too true. Thomas Thomason told the CMS that Bishop Middleton, the first Anglican bishop of India, "has come amongst us with a spirit by no means calculated to protect and to promote missionary labours." Thomason found that Middleton would not "acknowledge any relation" to the CMS missionaries and refused to allow them to preach in any of his churches. Middleton further informed Thomason that if he saw "any injudicious expression of zeal he shall think it right to notice and restrain it."<sup>46</sup> He had obviously gone out to India with every intention of controlling missionaries. Middleton was a High Churchman, "passionately attached" to the SPCK, who believed that the best way of disseminating Christianity was by example rather than through direct missionary activity. He was therefore unwilling to cooperate with the evangelical missionary societies, including the CMS, and refused to license or ordain their missionaries. Middleton was even more hostile to Dissenting missionaries and in 1821 gave a 'Charge' to his clergy in which he deprecated the fact that the 1813 charter had enabled "sectarian schismatic sentiments" to be brought into India.<sup>47</sup>

Middleton also declined to join the BFBS in Calcutta, which demonstrates the extremity of his views. The circulation of the Scriptures was something which even opponents of missionary activity were generally, although not always,

prepared to accept. Indeed, many thought that this was the only way the principles of Christianity should be propagated. Middleton, however, confined his support to the SPCK and SPG. His attitude had a harmful effect on the CMS and Dissenting missionary societies because it diminished their respectability. The CMS missionaries felt that his refusal to ordain their missionaries in particular gave them the appearance of being unlicensed preachers and heightened the divisions within the Church of England. As a result, the CMS became extremely defensive in attitude and felt it had to distance itself from the Dissenters. Public worship with Dissenters was accordingly forbidden by the Society and Pratt and Bickersteth, the secretaries, found it necessary to tell Rhenius, one of its Lutheran missionaries, that as the CMS is

suspected, calumnated and opposed by the majority of the members of the church to which it belongs, and the great body of these persons overvalue the discipline of the Church, and accuse the CMS of undervaluing it. Every member . . . and every missionary . . . is conscientiously bound to give no just ground for the accusation.<sup>48</sup>

It was not until the arrival of his successor, Bishop Heber, in 1823 that the CMS and the Dissenting missionary societies received encouragement. This was, however, short-lived and James, the bishop succeeding Heber, proved no friend to Dissenters. Amongst other things, he castigated the chaplain of Berhampore for supporting

"schismatics and enemies of the Church", by which he meant the Baptists.<sup>49</sup>

The Dissenting missionaries felt very bitter about James' attitude and the Calcutta missionaries in their annual report wrote of the "jealous eye with which the growing prosperity of the Dissenters is regarded by Churchmen". They felt strongly that the situation of Dissenters in India was worse than that of their fellows at home and expressed their feelings very graphically when they wrote that in England "party spirit" was like a "contemptible worm only crawling out under the concealment of darkness" whereas in India it was a "lurking serpent", "darting upon every passing traveller and mangling what it can devour."<sup>50</sup> The SPG missionaries who started work in India in the 1820s was another thorn in the side of the Dissenters. The SPG was very closely connected with the episcopacy and the SPG papers show very clearly that its main reason for commencing work in India was to halt the progress of the Dissenters.<sup>51</sup>

#### d. Bombay Presidency

No Protestant missions were started in the Bombay presidency before 1813. The LMS had hoped to start a mission in Surat in 1805 but had been forced to abandon the idea because of the governor's fears of "the turbulent

spirit" of the Muslims there.<sup>54</sup> The territory had only come under British rule in 1800 and was still in a very unsettled state. The first action of a Company official after the 1813 did not bode well for missionary activity. Marriott, the magistrate of Caranjah, told the Bombay government that reports were circulating that the Bombay government was endeavouring to procure the conversion of Indians by holding out pecuniary awards and that if this failed, compulsion would be used. Marriott thought these reports

originated from the publication of the examinations in Parliament of persons from India respecting the practicability of enforcing Christianity and this has been corroborated in the eyes of the natives by the recent establishment of a Bible Society in Bombay.

The Bombay government informed the Court of Directors, saying it understood that there had been similar feelings of alarm elsewhere in the presidency but, as no official complaint had been made, it deemed no further action was necessary.

The Bombay government under Evan Nepean seems to have been somewhat duplicitous about missionary activity in the presidency, failing to bring possibly contentious matters such as the formation of a Bible society to the attention of the Court of Directors. Similarly, when some British inhabitants of Bombay formed a Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor, although Nepean knew that the

'conversion of the heathen' was the ultimate object of the society, he agreed that its application to government would merely say ambiguously that it was for the children of Protestants or "of such other as may be disposed to avail themselves of its benefits."<sup>53</sup>

Without Nepean's support the American missionaries, who had fled to Bombay after their expulsion from Bengal in 1812, would have been forced to leave India. Nepean also did not object to Protestant missionaries setting up a station in Surat despite the continuing "prejudices" of the local population against missionaries.<sup>54</sup> The LMS missionaries in Surat, however, found no spirit of enquiry and no desire to have children instructed in the vernacular.<sup>55</sup> They reported a "considerable stir" among Muslims and that some Parsees had threatened to throw Aratoon, an Armenian who had become a Baptist catechist in Bengal, into the river in 1816. The LMS also found that they were unable to set up native schools "because of the great prejudice of the people" and the difficulties in obtaining teachers.<sup>56</sup>

In 1818 Nepean was replaced by Mountstuart Elphinstone, who refused the LMS permission to set up mission schools in the Deccan. Elphinstone told them that he feared "the opposition of the brahmins who had suffered greatly from Britain's assumption of power."<sup>57</sup> He wanted the missionaries to confine themselves to the island of Bombay.

In 1821, Elphinstone told the WMMS that it could not go to "South Konkum" because it was newly acquired territory.<sup>59</sup> Eventually the Wesleyans were permitted to establish schools there but with the proviso that they were not to be visited more than three or four times a year.<sup>60</sup> Despite Elphinstone's express wishes, the LMS missionaries went to Belgaum on the Maratha frontier and tried to set up stations in the area. The commanding officer told them that it was impossible to set up a station there. The local commissioner confirmed the embargo, explaining that he thought it "extremely premature and dangerous to attempt the conversion of the natives to Christianity in a new country like this, however quietly the attempt be made . . . tell them I entirely deprecate and disapprove of any interference with the natives in religious matters."<sup>60</sup>

There seems to have been more open and violent opposition to missionary activity in the Bombay presidency than in Madras or Bengal, where it was bad enough. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the reasons for this. However, much of the territory was far from reconciled to British rule and Elphinstone's caution cannot have encouraged otherwise sympathetic officials from using their influence to help the missionaries. The tone of the missionary letters is one of deep depression as they contemplated the seeming hopelessness of their task. The CMS missionaries, who started arriving from 1820, found

they suffered constant verbal abuse and occasionally even physical abuse. The opposition made it very difficult to set up schools and even the boys were insolent to the missionaries. In 1831, Mitchell complained that there was no convert or even a candidate after years of hard work. He found it very painful "to see how people run away when they think we would speak to them."<sup>61</sup> The Wesleyans working in Bombay itself experienced similar problems, finding they faced "all kinds of opposition, except open, violent and legal persecution".<sup>62</sup> In 1821 Fletcher told his society that if they put Christian masters in schools they would not have any scholars.<sup>63</sup> In Belgaum, where the LMS eventually set up a mission, after the baptism of two brahmins and a rajput in 1826, a great "ferment" was caused and several of Taylor's schools were nearly broken up. The conversions caused a particular stir in Bombay. False reports circulated; the converts were expelled from their caste and others took alarm. Two of the baptized could not hold out against the subsequent persecution.<sup>64</sup> Taylor's work was made harder than ever as a result. In 1832, he reported continuing opposition from the "Bramins and Jains".<sup>65</sup>

The CMS missionaries reported that they were often asked if they came from government. In one town they found that all the inhabitants seemed "impressed with the belief that we owe our support to a crafty ploy of government." In



another town they did not dare preach in the streets because of fears that the 'natives' would be so "incensed" that they would petition government for the missionaries' removal as had some inhabitants of Poona in 1823.<sup>66</sup> The care that both missionaries and Company officials in Bombay took to ensure that no connection between government and missionary activity could be made, seemed to have been to no avail.

e. Madras Presidency

1 Tinnevelly

Wilberforce made use of examples from South India to corroborate his contention that missionary activity had led to no tumult. He was on somewhat shaky ground here but his facts were not contradicted in Parliament. Wilberforce pointed out that there were thousands of Christians who lived and worked quietly in the South and who were highly regarded by their fellow Indians. This was true to a large extent. The Syrian Christians of Travancore had been in existence from at least the third century AD and possibly even earlier. They had long been accepted as a Christian caste on a social level with the upper Nayar warrior groups. The first conversions in Tinnevelly took place in the sixteenth century amongst the Paravas, who also became a highly regarded 'Christian caste'. However,

the Protestant conversions of thousands of low caste Shanars in Tinnevely at the beginning of the nineteenth century were a different matter.<sup>67</sup> These conversions aroused such opposition that the SPCK felt it necessary to petition the Court of Directors for protection for their converts whom it claimed were being badly persecuted both by the native authorities and their own fellows.<sup>68</sup> It may not be entirely coincidental that these conversions and persecutions occurred at the time when Tinnevely came under the full control of the British in 1801.

The mass conversions were a temporary phenomenon and little more was achieved, partly because of lack of labourers, until the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century when the Rev James Hough was appointed Company chaplain and the CMS started a mission with the German missionaries, C Rhenius and B Schmid. Opposition to their work started almost immediately. Hough tried to start a school with Christian masters but all the children were taken away. They only returned when a non-Christian was appointed.<sup>69</sup> When Rhenius and Schmid arrived they were informed by the fort adjutant at Palamcottah that they were "expressly forbidden" from interfering with the "customs and prejudices of the native troops."<sup>70</sup> They had other setbacks, many of them caused by their determination to root out caste which gave rise to jealousies between low caste Shanar and higher caste Vellala converts. By 1823

both Rhenius and Schmid were speaking of violent persecutions of their converts which included the seizing of their houses and grain. They felt that there was a "great enmity against Christianity".<sup>71</sup> The missionaries seemed to believe that the hatred was directed against Christianity generally but the fact that virtually all their converts were low caste must have been a consideration. The situation deteriorated still further in 1824 and persecutions reached the stage where the missionaries decided that it was their Christian duty to help the people stand up for what they perceived to be their rights. Rhenius and Schmid advised their converts to go to law rather than submit to injustice and wrote to the Collector protesting against the persecutions.<sup>72</sup> One such intervention involved a village where the headman had three or four Shanars falsely accused and taken to the kutcherry where they were flogged. Rhenius asked the Collector to intervene.<sup>73</sup>

Rhenius did not restrict his role as mediator to cases of violence but also believed he should help his Christians in representations against the unfair taxation which he believed they suffered.<sup>74</sup> In 1825 persecution reached a pitch in some villages that essential services such as barber, midwife and washerman were withdrawn from Christians because they had broken caste.<sup>75</sup> Rhenius listed other injustices that were being done to Christians by

their heathen neighbours. These included robbery, taking land, charging them higher taxes than Hindus in similar situations, giving no receipts and insisting on payment for idol festivals. The missionaries thought that the main reason behind the increase in persecutions was the increase in the numbers of conversions amongst the Shanars. Rhenius was not prepared to sit idly by and watch his converts suffer. He wrote in his journal:

I think it right that whatever can be done for securing their persons & estates & rights from the wanton attacks of their enemies, ought to be done, & therefore I either advise them to seek justice with the Collector, or request the Tasildar of the district to render them justice.<sup>76</sup>

This intervention by the German missionaries left James Monro, the Collector, little choice but to become involved in the disputes. Rhenius felt that eventually they received justice from him but it was a long, slow battle, despite the fact that Monro had promised to do all he could to help on first taking up his appointment.<sup>77</sup> Rhenius did, however, have one significant victory when, in May 1825, Monro forbade the ~~tasildars~~ "to force the people to pull the idol cart at [Hindu] feasts".<sup>78</sup> The edict against Christians pulling idol cars seems to have been the high point of the missionaries' success. In 1825 a new sub-collector, Kindersley, arrived who seems to have had an influence on Monro's attitude towards the use of missionaries as mediators in disputes. Kindersley

believed that the practice of missionaries writing to the Collector was "contrary to regularity". He also thought it was impolitic because "the opinion has gone abroad among the people that through the influence of their pastors, [the Shanars] are the objects of peculiar regard with their rulers."<sup>79</sup>

Disturbances became more frequent as the decade came to a close. In 1827 Rhenius reported that "many heathens and Muslims had assembled tumultuously" at a school with clubs and had hindered the boys and threatened the schoolmasters. Later that night the school was burnt down and Christians blamed.<sup>80</sup> In Tinnevely itself a group of heathen weavers erected mud walls to prevent Christian weavers from running their yarn. Rhenius appealed to the Collector who took nearly a fortnight before he issued orders that the mud walls were to be taken down.<sup>81</sup> The missionaries also found they had difficulties in starting schools and that Hindus were disputing the right of Christians to own land. In 1828 a petition signed by 183 people was sent to the Collector complaining that Rhenius spoke ill of their gods and impeded tax collections and asking for him to be removed. Rhenius claimed that the signatories were brahmins and sudras.<sup>82</sup> Rhenius believed that much of this opposition was caused by the fact that, encouraged by the missionaries, the Shanars were not submitting to "spoliation and oppression" and were applying the law for

the redress of their grievances. By this time Rhenius saw the opposition to his converts as much in economic and social terms as in straightforward opposition to Christianity. He wrote in his journal that

the real knot to be untied is whether poor Shanars will be able to prevail against rich Soodras. The latter are angrily astonished that Shanars make so bold a stand against them & they spare no expense in procuring lying witnesses in order to put the Shanars down. Christianity is also connected with it. For as Shanars are Christians they must be kept under that Christianity might not receive encouragement.<sup>43</sup>

By 1829 Rhenius and Schmid found that the Tinnevely congregation was "almost continually in agitation" both from the heathen and other Christians.<sup>44</sup> In one village the Christian headman did not dare leave his house for fear of being murdered. By 1830 the congregations were losing people. The missionaries believed that the losses were directly due to the harassments many Christians were suffering. The picture was far from cheerful. Whether or not one accepts that the converts were genuinely persecuted or were opposed because they were demanding rights they had not hitherto been allowed, Rhenius and Schmid believed that they were persecuted and that it was the duty of the British authorities to redress their grievances. The examples given here demonstrate that Monro, although sympathetic to the missionaries, was very cautious in his dealings with them. His earlier actions in their favour seem to have increased opposition rather

than decreased it. The impression is given that Monro would rather not have had the problems to face and his support was fairly minimal. When representations were made to him about Christians paying idol taxes, Monro replied that only the Board of Revenue could order relief.<sup>85</sup>

Junior officials seem to have been even more cautious. In 1829, the Sub-Collector dismissed the "just complaint" of a Christian "for not suffering quietly his goods to be taken." The Christian had been pierced in the back by a spear during a dispute. Eventually the Sub-Collector ordered the Christian to be flogged.<sup>86</sup> However, while the Company officials in Tinnevely had to be prodded to do anything to help Christians and seem to have been nervous about any support that might irritate the rest of the population, there does not seem to have been any question of restricting the movements of the missionaries.

#### 11 Travancore

The case of Travancore well illustrates the influence that a sympathetic British Resident could have on Indian treatment of Christians. The LMS was present in Travancore at the invitation of Col Colin Macaulay, the first Resident. Its work was mainly among the low caste Shanars. Encouraged by the 1813 success, Col John Munro, his successor, invited the CMS to work with the Syrian Christians. Munro believed that it was the duty of every

Christian to support and encourage the propagation of "genuine" [Protestant] Christianity and that he had a particular role to play as Resident. He regarded the diffusion of Christianity "as a measure equally important to the interests of humanity and to the stability of our power".<sup>47</sup> This was the same argument used by earlier evangelicals in their attempts to persuade the Company and the British government to do more for Christianity in India. It was a direct appeal both to the humanitarian spirit of the age and to the self-interest of the East India Company and the British government.

Munro was an autocratic man with a systematic plan for the conversion of Travancore. He was much influenced by Claudius Buchanan's views on the Jacobite Syrian Christians as the key to the diffusion of Christianity in Travancore, which would be consolidated by distribution of the Scriptures and instruction in the English language. Munro wanted to detach the Jacobites from the Romo-Syrians. to make them a client community of the British with a high standing in Travancore society. He aimed to do this by granting them privileges, believing that in return the British government would receive "their grateful and devoted attachment [of the Jacobites] on every emergency", as the "reward due to its benevolence and wisdom". He also forecast the conversion of the greater part of the Roman Catholics on the coast as a result of attaching the



Jacobites to Protestant Christianity and British influence.<sup>88</sup>

The new Rani was accordingly persuaded to take a considerable number of Jacobite Syrians into public service and to pass a law that a Christian judge should be present in every zillah court. Munro was determined to keep the missionaries under his personal control and made them the channel of communication between himself and the Jacobite Syrians. All applications for appointments and redress of grievance were to pass through the missionaries. Norton of the CMS and Mead of the LMS were appointed as judges to deal with disputes involving Christians. In addition, Munro persuaded the Rani to grant generous gifts of money, land and building materials to the Protestant missionaries. Two thousand acres was granted for the support of the CMS seminary and 5000 rupees to buy paddy fields to support the educational institutions of the LMS. Other gains included tax concessions and a memorial from the Rani giving Christian converts inheritance rights and a law fully exempting all followers of the Christian religion in Travancore from all duties connected with temples.<sup>89</sup> One letter reveals the method Munro used to 'encourage' the Rani's generosity. An overpayment of 20,000 rupees had been made to the Company and Munro suggested to the Rani that "in the event of her deciding of her own free will" to grant this money to the CMS seminary

at Cottayam "such an act of generosity on her part would add greatly to the lustre of her reputation and serve to cement the friendship already existing between the Rani and the East India Company."<sup>90</sup> The Rani needed this friendship. She was acting as regent with the Company's support. Her power base was weak and the administration corrupt. The state was in debt and great discontent had been caused by the oppressive taxes that had been levied on the population. Without Munro's support she would have found it impossible to carry on.

Munro put on an official basis what Rhenius and Schmid had unofficially been doing in Tinnevely. His control and support of missionary operations and his appointment of missionaries as judges placed the Protestant missions in the eyes of the population as an arm of the state.<sup>91</sup> This was regarded by many as a breach of the Company's policy of neutrality in matters of religion. To the brahminical Hindus who held power in Travancore, this seemed a revolt against the existing social system. The concessions short-circuited the local judicial and revenue machinery and antagonised landholders and notables. They also aroused jealousy in groups who were not so fortunate. The Jacobite Syrian Christians in particular were marked out as a client community of the British. Resentment was also caused within the Syrian community by the missionaries' interference in disputes over church ownership. The CMS

missionaries were instrumental in ensuring that a number of churches used by the Catholic Syrians were taken away from them on the grounds that they had originally belonged to the Jacobites. This stirred up such resentment against the missionaries that Norton told the CMS that "it was doubtful whether we should remain in the country another month."<sup>93</sup> These developments led to their alienation from other Syrian Christians and the wider Hindu community. The balance between the Syrian church leadership and the state was upset by Munro and never recovered its former harmony.

Once Munro left Travancore in 1819 the concessions to the Christians virtually ceased. Cheriyan states that the appointment of nearly 300 Syrians in public service was dispensed with almost immediately after Munro's departure and the inferior officers of the Travancore government made it an occasion for harassing the Christians.<sup>94</sup> In the early 1820s Hindus and Christians began to clash over issues of temple honours and the organisation of festivals and the allocation of temple shares.<sup>94</sup> Higher caste Hindus refused to accept the wearing of an upper cloth by Shanar women. While Macaulay and Munro were Resident, antipathy was, on the whole, kept underground. However, the tensions set up at the beginning of the nineteenth century by their behaviour and inherent in the position of Travancore as a subsidiary state effectively under

British control, came to the surface under less positive Residents.

Col McDouall succeeded Munro in 1819 and he took a completely different line towards the missionaries and the Christians of Travancore. McDouall started by telling Bailey, one of the CMS missionaries, that he did not "think it right that 340 Roman Catholic families should be deprived of their only place of worship in order to give churches to the new Metran [of the Jacobite Christians]."<sup>95</sup> McDouall was referring here to the CMS responsibility for churches being removed from Roman Catholic Syrians. He defused the tension caused by the CMS interference and Norton acknowledged that it was due to the new Resident that they were not expelled.<sup>96</sup> McDouall, however, left the missionaries in no doubt as to the policy he would pursue towards the Jacobite Christians. He told them:

In regard to the protection you solicit for the Syrians from the British government, . . . they are already more highly favoured than any class of the subjects of the Travancore government, . . . . What is just I will seek to support them in; and this is all that becomes the national representative to interfere with.<sup>97</sup>

Nevertheless, the CMS missionaries continued to complain of the 'oppression' of the Christians. Bailey stated that often there were as many as fifty Christians at a time at the College complaining of oppression, most of whom were poor and "unable to bear the expense of an application to

the courts" for redress.<sup>94</sup> Like Rhenius and Schmid in Tinnevely, Bailey and his fellow missionaries "thought it no more than our duty to pass this on to the Resident" and also engaged in much correspondence with the native government to obtain redress of grievances for the Christians.<sup>95</sup> The Christians mentioned would have been Jacobite Christians. The CMS complaints included a list of sixty-two vacant posts "for which Syrians are required". They also informed the Resident that Christians were "compelled to give the Sircar grain, sugar and other articles at a quarter to half the price which they themselves can purchase . . . ." Their representations, however, fell on deaf ears. McDouall refused to investigate "general accusations", pointing out to the missionaries that "the natives will know the channel of redress for real grievance."<sup>100</sup>

While the CMS concentrated its efforts on the Jacobite Syrians and were not attempting to make converts at this time, the LMS were working amongst the Shanars and having some success, mainly in the area around Neyoor. This success and the fact that Mead was appointed a judge seems to have stimulated considerable opposition. Thompson, the LMS missionary in Quilon, told his directors of the "evil suggestions, false reports and childish fears" that were circulating about the Christians. He reported that Christian houses were robbed and converts ill-used and

falsely imprisoned and how in one village the native Christians were forced to take to the mountains for safety. Particular difficulties were experienced in setting up schools. A schoolroom was burnt down and a schoolmaster imprisoned along with several other Christians.<sup>101</sup> Part of the problem seems to have been that the missionaries would not allow "the obscene and ridiculous and idolatrous books that have formerly been tolerated." Thompson reported that many parents suspected him of a design to force Christianity on them and also felt that the higher castes resented and feared the education of the Shanars.<sup>102</sup> The CMS had experienced similar problems when they tried to set up a school in a bazaar.<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, Addis at Nagercoil reported that "the heathen around us have evinced a considerable degree of hostility towards the Christians within the last few days."<sup>104</sup> This included surveying Christian houses to see if they had broken any rule about size and convenience. This was to ensure that no Christian convert was living in a house above his station.<sup>105</sup> Opposition from Roman Catholics was also a problem. The priests deeply resented Protestant successes amongst their flocks and, in some cases, this led to violent opposition. The Catholics in their turn appealed to the British Resident for redress. Mault reported "violent RC opposition" and that the Bishop of Cochin was said to have represented Protestant

Christians to the Resident as "disturbers of the peace" and to have asked the Resident to prohibit the Protestant schools.<sup>106</sup>

The gains made under Munro and Macaulay were soon eroded through the antipathy of the native authorities and elites in Travancore, many of whom were unhappy both with British influence and with missionary disturbance of the status quo. Once Col Munro was gone, persecution of the Christians began again and they found themselves under the old restrictions and harassments. By 1829, as in Tinnevely, the situation had deteriorated to the extent that they felt the opposition extended to every department of their labours. They could not get workmen. Threatening language was used to dissuade Christians from going to worship and men were seized for public work on the sabbath contrary to the concession granted by the Rani Parvathi Bai. Schools were occasionally interrupted and books thrown into the street. Shanar women converts were publicly beaten for wearing a cloth over their bosoms. A new proclamation had been issued requiring permission for the erection of places of worship. Although this was not specifically addressed against Christian places of worship, it was interpreted by officials as denying permission to Christian establishments. Twenty-four Christians were placed on false charges of murder and assault.<sup>107</sup> The one member of a high caste who showed an interest in

Christianity, according to Mead, was "seized by the native government in 1828" after a disturbance between the Nayers and Christians and put in prison in Quilon without public accusation or being brought to trial. This, Mead said, was "to deter high castes from embracing Christianity". The man was not released until 1835.<sup>108</sup> Mead himself was threatened that his house would be burnt down and he would be speared.

One effect of the withdrawal of concessions from the Christians was the reversion of hundreds of 'nominal Christians' who had converted to Christianity under the "favourable disposition of Col Munro" to Hinduism once they found that they would not receive these concessions.<sup>109</sup> The LMS missionaries placed the responsibility for the 'persecutions' their Christians were suffering squarely on the shoulders of Nayers and the sircar officers whom they believed had the aim of rooting out all Christianity from the district. It seems much more likely that it was the 'new' Christianity of the Shanars that was objected to rather than Christianity in general. The Syrian Christians had lived and worked in Travancore for centuries as an accepted and respected section of society. Mead specifically blamed the diwan: "a subtle enemy and as long as he is in the country we cannot expect peace."<sup>110</sup> In another letter he blamed the Raja's father, whom he stated was at the root of much of the trouble.<sup>111</sup> Mault



similarly thought that "the principal evil" with which they had to contend was "the great hatred of the officers of Government to Christianity." He attributed the "aversion" mainly to the fact that "the Christian refuses to give bribes". Mault maintained that, as a result, the sircars represented the Christians as "turbulent" and "disaffected to Government" and "under that plea no opportunity is let slip to annoy them and the opportunities are frequent." He concluded by complaining of the host of taxes imposed by the native authorities and the distrust and oppression that was now the lot of the poor.<sup>112</sup>

Bailey of the CMS concurred with the LMS view, stating that the new Raja "has listened to advisers directly opposed to the propagation of Christianity." This, he believed, had aroused "a general feeling of hostility not only to the cause of missions, but even to British authority."<sup>113</sup>

Unlike Macaulay and Munro, later Residents were much more cautious about active support of Christianity in Travancore. According to the missionaries, Stewart, McDouall's temporary successor, was "strongly against the Syrians."<sup>114</sup> Newell, the next Resident, was more disposed to be helpful and persuaded the rani to grant the CMS some timber for building.<sup>115</sup> He also told the Syrian Metran that Christians required to do pagoda service could have redress to him.<sup>116</sup>

Church/Dissent rivalry was also present in the attitude of Company officials towards the missionaries. The long-term aim of Munro's intercessions had been to help the propagation of Anglican Christianity. Col Newell was also predisposed to help the CMS more than the LMS. He told Crow of the LMS that if he [Newell] did any more for missionary activity, "it would not be without the pale of the Established Church." Newell disapproved of the LMS concentration on the poorer classes and entirely disapproved of the introduction of catechising in the schools, recommending instead Aesop's Fables.<sup>117</sup> On the other hand, Newell had earlier been kind to the LMS missionaries and contributed towards the upkeep of some of their schools. Morison, the Resident in 1827, would not allow the LMS to set up a station at Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore. He told Miller that this was because he was apprehensive "such a step would excite the alarm and opposition of the native Government" and "referred to the prejudices and influence of the Bramhins."<sup>118</sup> Miller kept trying unsuccessfully to form a mission at or near Trivandrum and eventually the LMS decided to send Miller to Coimbatore where there was a Collector with a "high character for piety and liberal views, which circumstances seem to render it a favourable time for commencing a mission there."<sup>119</sup>

As in the difficult years of 1807-12, the missionaries explained the lack of help given by the Residents by saying that they were unfavourable to Christianity. It is far more likely that Residents were cautious because, by the 1820s, the tensions within Travancore society were such that they wanted to do nothing which might irritate the native elites any further. Their primary duty was the stability of Travancore not the promulgation of Christianity. The Resident told Bailey that he "feared that Christian institutions would be publicly opposed and that the Rajah would probably be induced to take some step which would lead the British government to have recourse to prompt measures for the support of its own interests." What these measures were to be he did not explain but it is known that the missionaries were forbidden to get involved in any disputes between the Christians and the native government. By 1829 both the CMS and the LMS missionaries realised that it was "advisable to act with great caution in all our proceedings."<sup>140</sup>

There does not seem to have been any suggestion that the missionaries should be removed from Travancore because of the tension to which they had undoubtedly greatly contributed. However, they knew how much they depended on the sympathy of the Resident for their safety and the propagation of their work. Mead was in no doubt about the importance of a favourable British Resident and wrote that

it was only the favourable attitude of the Resident that could keep opposition to missionary activity under control. Mead's experience was that in general "the Company servants . . . like to have as little trouble as possible on subjects of a religious nature" and that "they decide in favour of the Hindoo or Mahometan" rather than the Christian because "the Christian has no one to plead for him except the missionary & he is now absolutely forbidden to hear the complaints of the people who look up to him for advice & counsel."<sup>14</sup>

For Mead and many other missionaries at the time, the plight of their people cried out for action. Their directors at home, however, were not happy with missionary involvement in public affairs. Both the CMS and the LMS advised their missionaries to interfere with public affairs as little as possible. They felt that the missionary involvement in disputes and Munro's actions had been counterproductive, both in terms of large numbers of 'rice Christians' attracted by the hope of material improvement and in terms of the jealousies aroused in the rest of the population. The line to adopt was a difficult one to decide for both missionaries and British officials. Nevertheless, this account of developments in Travancore suggests that, even in areas where Christianity was relatively strong, the extent to which local officials

would or would not countenance them was crucial to the missionaries.

### 111 Mysore

Mysore, like Travancore, had come under British influence after Tipu Sultan's defeat in 1799. Protestant missionaries did not start work in the state, however, until the LMS arrived in the 1820s. Mysore had been decided upon by the LMS as a mission station because both Cole, the Resident at the Raja's court, and the commanding officer at Bangalore were believed to be favourable to missionary activity.<sup>122</sup>

The initial hope that Mysore would prove to be a fruitful field of work were not borne out and the missionaries' letters of the 1820s and early 1830s provide an almost continuous record of obstruction and opposition. In 1822, Chambers told his society of the "volatile disposition" of Indians when talking about their religion.<sup>123</sup> Two years later Laidler informed the LMS that the headman and others in a village near Bangalore had prevented the erection of a school.<sup>124</sup> In another village three brothers were expelled because of complaints and false charges from the headman.<sup>125</sup> In 1825 the missionaries were refused permission to erect a chapel in the pettah by the native authorities.<sup>126</sup> The first report of the committee of the

auxiliary missionary society set up in Bangalore blamed their troubles on "the invincible prejudices existing in the minds of the natives against Xtianity and the strong attachment which they feel to the religion of their fathers."<sup>127</sup> Caste was regarded as the great obstacle to the progress of Christianity, and the missionaries also blamed the attitude of the native authorities whom they believed to be greatly prejudiced against Christianity.

The missionaries in Mysore, like those in Travancore and Tinnevely, accused the Roman Catholics of fomenting trouble amongst the populace. Roman Catholics had been present in Mysore for over a century. In 1824 when the LMS had trouble obtaining land in Bangalore, they suspected that Roman Catholics had prejudiced the authorities against them.<sup>128</sup> Two years later the LMS missionaries complained that "heathens, Mohammedans and Papists" had met in Mysore and "combined to send a false report and prefer a complaint to the rajah about some native catechists seen preaching in a market in Mysore". As a result, the Raja ordered them out of the city.<sup>129</sup> The missionaries' letters demonstrated that they were very anti-Catholic and the conversion of an Indian Catholic was an occasion for jubilation and triumph. The Protestant missionaries found Indian Catholics easier to approach than Hindus or Muslims and did their best to convert them,

often successfully. This was bound to lead to antipathy and rivalry in a long-established community of Christians.

As in Tinnevely and Travancore, the late 1820s and early 1830s was a time of great unrest in Mysore. In 1831 there were many riots by the poor against the native government. Troops were called in and Campbell of the LMS calculated that about 500 people were massacred by them.<sup>130</sup>

Campbell believed that "the Bramins" took advantage of the unrest "to alarm the people into the belief that in addition to taking the country under their rule, Britain was about to make them all Christians by force." At a Muslim festival an incident involving a pig's head surmounted by a cross led to a riot. Violence was not restricted to the Protestants and the Roman Catholic chapel was broken up and there were threats against every place of worship. Christians were denounced as persecutors and enemies of Muslims. The Company's reaction was to conciliate Muslim sensibilities and Campbell found that as a result, Muslims became "impudent beyond all endurance" and abused the LMS catechists whenever possible.

Campbell deemed it advisable to concentrate on the villages outside Bangalore where he believed the people were less under brahminical influence than in Bangalore itself.<sup>131</sup> However, the Christians found themselves just as much the object of ridicule when they went out to villages and were

threatened by Muslims with staves and stones. Campbell thought the tension was heightened at this time because the rains had failed and there was raging cholera, not to speak of swarms of locusts and falling meteors. Towards the end of 1832, a plot to seize the fort at Bangalore and murder all Europeans was discovered. All this boded ill for the missionaries, especially after Lushington, governor of Madras, sent a memorial to the government saying the disturbances were caused by the efforts of missionaries to convert Muslims. In the face of such adversities, the missionaries decided that it would be prudent to suspend their public exertions altogether for a time.<sup>132</sup>

The LMS was joined in 1827 by the WMMS. The WMMS, like the LMS, had difficulty in obtaining land at Bangalore. John England, a WMMS missionary, blamed the trouble on the LMS, telling his society that because of their "misconduct", the Madras government, "at the instigation of the Mysore Court, prohibited the commandant from appropriating any land in the cantonment to religious purposes."<sup>133</sup> England also came into conflict with the Roman Catholics in a village where he had been given a house that had previously been used for Roman Catholic services. In the end, the Catholics won, allegedly because the military commander feared disturbances if the house was not given back to the Catholics.<sup>134</sup> Further trouble occurred in 1833 when England sent out letters of



invitation to attend the opening of his Etruscan chapel to the Canarese and Tamil population. According to England, this aroused "great alarm that this was the commencement of a series of compulsory measures, in some way or other, connected as they feared, with the [British] government, to make them xtms."<sup>135</sup>

The attitude of Company officials in Mysore from the beginning was far more cautious than that of the officials responsible for Travancore and Tinnevely. This was not surprising as Mysore had only come under British effective control after a long and bloody campaign and the supporters of the former Muslim regime would have greatly resented the installation of a Hindu raja by the British. The Vellore Mutiny was still recent enough to be remembered. There was religious tension in Mysore without the added complication of Christian missionary activity. However, although officials were prepared to restrict Protestant missionary activity much more than they had done in Travancore and Tinnevely, and despite Lushington's adverse memorial, missionaries were not expelled from the territory.

#### iv Madras, Tranquebar and the Northern Circars

Protestant missionaries had been present in Madras itself since the arrival of Schultze, the Royal Danish/SPCK

missionary in 1726. Most of the missionary work concentrated on the European and mixed population. Perhaps this explains the fact that there is no record of resistance to the missionaries from the Indian population prior to 1817 when some Hindus objected to the building of a CMS place of worship in their street.<sup>136</sup> The Wesleyans, who commenced work in Madras in 1816, found that the "respectable natives" were not interested in Christianity and that the poor were too "oppressed" to think about religion.<sup>137</sup> After ten years, with between three and five missionaries working in Madras at any one time, they had achieved a total of twenty-two converts.<sup>138</sup> The record for the LMS was even worse. The society had been in Madras since 1805 yet, in 1833, there was a 'native church' of seven members.<sup>139</sup> Several LMS schools had to be given up in the 1820s, one because of Muslim opposition.<sup>140</sup> The CMS seems to have fared little better. The report of the Madras Mission of 1832 talked of very great difficulties. The soil did not appear to be at all fertile and the difficulties were compounded by the generally unsympathetic attitude of the governors of Madras at this time. The CMS report intimated that many of the difficulties experienced by the missionaries and their converts were a direct result of the Company's involvement in idolatrous festivals and the ineligibility of Indian Christians for many public situations.<sup>141</sup> These factors will be discussed later in the chapter.

Outside Madras town, the situation seems to have been similar to that already described for Tinnevely. Tranquebar, the earliest centre of Protestant missionary activity in India, was not an easy field of work by 1814. The Royal Danish mission was all but moribund and the CMS, which tried to fill the gap, had to rely on a native catechist, John Devasagayam. The situation appears to have been similar to that described for Tinnevely. In 1821 Devasagayam reported the burning down of a school and the beating and wounding of several Christians. He also said that Christians were robbed of their corn and their plantations were ruined. As the decade wore on he found he was dealing with increasing numbers of disputes over ritual status and claims that his converts were being oppressed. Devasagayam decided to represent cases of oppression to Clarke, the British magistrate. Clarke found in favour of the Christians and punished the 'oppressors'.<sup>142</sup> The situation did not, however, improve as the 1820s wore on.

The LMS set up their first mission in the south at Vizagapatam in the Northern Circars in 1805. Initially Cran and Desgranges found themselves well-received both by the English community and by some Indians. A letter of 1 October 1806, mentions that the "zamindar has done us many favours" and that the "rajah of Vizianagram" has visited.<sup>143</sup> However, there was opposition from brahmins and apathy from the rest of the population. In 1813 the

zillah judge gave good character references for Gordon and Pritchett and secured their appointment as chaplains to the military.<sup>144</sup> This helped their finances but did not lead to any Indian conversions. By 1813 the missionaries had come to realize the "stubborn soil and years of painful toil" that would be required before any conversions might be made. They found the greatest problem to be Hindu fears of losing caste.<sup>145</sup> In 1822 Gordon, one of the missionaries, set out in his journal some of the problems the missionaries had experienced. These ranged from disputatious brahmins to Indians who would not accept their tracts because of fears of pollution or who were only interested in money.<sup>146</sup> The missionaries also found that the people "were terrified lest we should force their children to become Christian and for several years we could not establish a second school." Company officials were nervous of their plans and "discouraged", 'admonished' and 'abused' the missionaries.<sup>147</sup> The officials did not, however, expressly forbid them from establishing schools or even from using the Scriptures in them. The missionaries saw that without "Job's patience" and "Abraham's faith" they would be unable to persevere in the work.<sup>148</sup>

Lee at Ganjam, which was established as an LMS station in 1813 seems to have been in an even worse position because of the unstable political situation in the area. Ganjam was the northernmost district of the Madras presidency,

which took longer to pacify than any other area. In 1816 it was raided by four to five thousand Pindaris. In addition, there were open disturbances from the hill tribes for most of the period 1813-1832. Lee was informed that his arrival had caused "considerable alarm among the natives who were afraid, they would be obliged to become Christians." It seems that the "chief men of the place" had gone to the magistrate to ask what the English would do next as "he had built a church and now a missionary was come to settle among them." It was against this background that the magistrate informed Lee that

nothing could be attempted among the hills in the present unsettled state of things as the least irritation there, would probably bring the natives (who are half savage) down upon us, to cut our throats.

Lee was not permitted to preach or to even to put the Scriptures in the hands of the native population. The magistrate, however, was happy for Lee to establish schools in Ganjam and south to Chicacole.<sup>149</sup> The situation deteriorated still further as a result of Pindari raids on the area, to the extent that a friend wrote to Lee that it was not considered safe or provident for any European to reside at Ganjam or the district.<sup>150</sup>

In 1810, the LMS had started work in Bellary on the borders of Mysore. Bellary had been ceded to the British in 1800. Hands, the missionary, found that his first

hurdle was to overcome the hostility of Company officials, who believed he was a Methodist. The Collector made it difficult to procure a place for a school and public worship.<sup>151</sup> However, by 1819, eleven native schools had been established and according to Reeve, who had joined Hands in the mission, all were flourishing. This did not, however, mean that Indians were being converted and Reeve had to tell his society how he regretted he could not send news of any "genuine conversions". Instead, he bemoaned the "amazing and awful apathy of the Hindoos in matters of religion" and told of the numbers of Indians who came "in the hope of material gain".<sup>152</sup>

By 1818 there appears to have been outright opposition to the missionaries. Perhaps this was due to the instability arising from a year of "death, death, nothing but death" due to an unknown epidemic and Pindari raids.<sup>153</sup> There was resistance to the teaching of the Scriptures in the schools, although this seems to have died down by 1824.<sup>154</sup> Another problem was considerable opposition from Roman Catholics as a result of their work amongst the mixed Catholic population. Catholics had been in the area since 1775. In general, however, opposition to missionary work in Bellary was not great in comparison to other areas at this time. Hands attributed this to the small number of conversions and in 1825 told his Society that "when divine truth begins to operate more powerfully in the hearts of

the poor heathen around, we may expect to meet more opposition than we have yet experienced."<sup>155</sup>

Howell, a former surveyor for the East India Company, left Bellary to commence an LMS mission in Cuddapah in 1822. At first he felt he was well received but in 1823 found that he was unable to preach in Cuddapah without disturbance. On one occasion he even had to send for a police guard. Howell was of the opinion that his opponents were Muslims. A farmer explained the opposition to him by saying that a rumour was circulating to the effect that he had come to unite all castes and religions into one.<sup>156</sup> By 1825 the opposition seemed to have abated somewhat and Howell told his directors that there was "prejudice but no outright opposition" to his work. This was despite the fact that he seemed to be having some success, with 216 baptisms in the year October 1824 - September 1825 and a Christian village set up.<sup>157</sup> It was, however, to be a lull before the storm.

By the end of the 1820s, opposition had reached a stage where Howell felt there was a systematic campaign to get rid of him. In 1831 he described to the LMS how the population set about "having the missionaries removed from settling among them" by using vexing and irritating behaviour calculated to "bring on unpleasant proceeding", and by encouraging people to give false evidence against

Christians. He was greatly worried that the local officials would report circumstances in an unfavourable light and this would probably lead to his removal on the grounds that he was "interfering with the religion of the natives". Nevertheless, he also believed that he was not likely to be removed unless he interfered in "worldly or political matters".<sup>159</sup>

In 1832 a crisis occurred when a pig was placed in Cuddapah mosque and Christians were blamed. Similar incidents occurred at Bangalore, Bellary, Arcot and Nellore.<sup>160</sup> At Cuddapah a crowd set off, allegedly with the intention to destroy Howell and his family. Macdonald, the Sub-Collector, and several sepoys were hacked to pieces as they led troops to Howell's rescue. Shortly after this, it was reported that Muslims at Chittoor were indicating great hostility against Christianity and were placing the responsibility for disturbances on the missionaries.<sup>161</sup> Howell was of the opinion that the incidents formed part of a general attack on the British government and stated that some of the police guard were "implicated with the mob" and "the principal servants of government also deserted him".<sup>162</sup> Casamajor was sent to investigate the disturbance and found that there was a "very general belief that the religions of the country were intended to be overthrown."<sup>163</sup> Howell stayed at his post and no action was taken to restrict his work. He was not the only



missionary to be threatened. Some inhabitants of Pulicat threatened to tie their new CMS missionary to a tree and flog him.<sup>164</sup>

Missionaries went to other parts of the Madras presidency towards the end of the 1820s and tended to choose areas where it was thought the local Company officials would be sympathetic. The choice of Coimbatore for the LMS was mentioned earlier. Sullivan, the Collector, had made it known that he felt there should be a missionary in every district.<sup>164</sup> The LMS confidence in Sullivan seems to have been well-placed. He stopped the custom of forcing Christians to perform services at Hindu festivals, although threatened with his life if he did so.<sup>165</sup> Salem was chosen in 1827 with similar hopes. Cockburn, the Collector, was believed to know "the value of true religion" and to be "earnestly desirous of lending his extensive and important authority for the furtherance of any measure which may tend to the promotion of it among the heathen within his jurisdiction." The LMS had also chosen Salem because they believed that there was "little brahminical influence to oppose our efforts" there.<sup>166</sup> Dacre, the judge at Chittoor, was another Company official who gave all the help he could to the missionaries. However, he also asked that his name "on no occasion be published . . . because of the peculiar light in which the Indian government look upon exertions made by any of the

Company's servants, for the purpose of introducing Christianity among the heathen."<sup>167</sup>

Despite the friendly disposition of officials such as these, the missionaries in the Madras Presidency found the going very hard. They achieved few baptisms and experienced considerable difficulty in setting up schools because of Indian suspicions that they were a precursor to forcible conversion and even to sending their children far from home. Evil rumours about the missionaries' characters and intentions circulated freely. Disturbances were attributed to Christians whenever possible. The missionaries were constantly worried about the effect this would have on the attitude of Company officials towards them, especially as they were aware of a certain lack of sympathy on the part of the governors of Madras

The missionaries found that Hugh Elliot, governor from 1814-1820, was "inclined to hinder proceedings" and insisted that before any missionaries left Madras for other stations, they first obtain the permission of the chief civil officer of the proposed station, followed by the ratification of the governor-in-council.<sup>168</sup> A Madras public despatch of 1816 castigated the CMS missionary, Bailey for going to Aleppey without permission and reiterated that "the Governor-in-Council cannot recognize the competency of any Society in England, or the agents of

any Society even to form a judgement with regard to those considerations."<sup>169</sup> In 1817, when the residents of a street in which a CMS church was being built complained to government, the CMS had to move elsewhere. The Madras government justified its actions by saying that "it is desirable that another site should be selected for the proposed church, with a view of guarding against any breach of the peace, and avoiding just cause of offence to the Hindoo inhabitants of the street in which the present site lies." The Madras government tried to sweeten the pill by saying the society would be indemnified for any sums already spent and told Thompson that it would give "every encouragement consistent with the paramount regard due to the peace and good order of the community at large." The next year, the CMS were told that "the governor-in-council prohibits the appropriation of any place to the purposes of public worship for Christians, without the previous sanction of government."<sup>170</sup> The press in Madras was under strict censorship and this further curtailed their activities. They were forbidden to set up an association for the publication and distribution of tracts. Marmaduke Thompson in 1818 complained of the strong prejudices in Madras of "many around the Governor" and a "very virulent" anti-missionary disposition". Thompson wished that the missionaries "had liberty" to print and circulate letters and reports as was permitted in Calcutta. He reported to the CMS that in Madras the press was "under severe

restrictions" and "of almost all religious publication - nothing can be printed without a licence from the Censor, the Chief Secretary to Government, or rather it seems now the Governor himself, and that a licence is not very easily to be had . . . ." <sup>171</sup> Disabilities for native Christians, particularly eligibility for certain public posts and the army, on the Court's own admission, were worse in the Madras presidency than elsewhere. <sup>172</sup> The missionary societies were thus left in absolutely no doubt about the fact that their activities in India would be controlled by the Madras government and that converts would receive little help. Sir Thomas Munro and Stephen Rumbold Lushington carried on Elliot's cautious line.

As in Bengal, commanding officers and the Madras government were not happy about attempts to convert sepoys. The commanding officer at Palamcottah told Rhenius that he was not to work amongst the sepoys. <sup>173</sup> Campbell, one of the LMS missionaries at Bangalore, told his directors in 1831 that sepoy converts were being "persecuted beyond all endurance and expelled from their regiments because they have embraced the gospel." <sup>174</sup> Shortly after this the missionaries were further restricted in their activities. A circular was received prohibiting missionaries and catechists from visiting the jails after an incident involving the missionaries at Bellary and two Hindu convicts. <sup>175</sup> The following year soldiers were restricted

from attending missionary chapels at Bangalore, Bellary, Arcot, Nellore and Belgaum except when the Company chaplain was absent.<sup>176</sup> There seems to have been an anti-Dissent element in the last order as this was mainly a restriction of the missionaries' work amongst the European soldiers.

The missionaries, on the whole were not fortunate in the men appointed as presidency governors in this period. The notable exception to the general picture of extreme caution was Sir Evan Nepean, governor of Bombay 1812-19. It is doubtful whether without his sympathetic support, the American missionaries who had illegally entered India in 1812, would have been allowed to stay. The Marquess of Hastings, of whom the missionaries had such great hopes, proved to be a lukewarm friend in all but matters of education. Nepean's successors in Bombay, Mountstuart Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm, put considerations of security above all else. Elphinstone, as mentioned earlier, would not allow the missionaries into the Maratha country. It seems he also felt the missionary schools "had too much of the Christian religion in them" and "condemned the gods of the people which ought not to be".<sup>177</sup> At Madras, Hugh Elliot, Sir Thomas Munro and Stephen Lushington were almost antipathetic to missionary activity. Typical of their views is the following extract from a letter from Munro to George Canning, president of the Board of Control. Munro wrote:

Our power in this country is now very great and I think is in no danger of being shaken if the local governments are enabled to keep the press and the missionaries within proper bounds . . . the law and the church will always encroach unless they are restrained by superior authority and they are more apt to do so when there is no government on the spot which can control them.<sup>17e</sup>

These governors, particularly Munro and Elphinstone, were influential not only in India but had powerful friends in the Court of Directors and Board of Control. These governors were pragmatic men, with a paternalistic view of their role in India. They considered themselves to be good Christians but nevertheless respected the attachment Indians felt to their religions and could see some goodness in them. Their views contrasted with the contempt most of the missionaries at this time felt for Indian religions and culture. In 1833, after over a century in India, the Protestant missionaries had only the prospect of great toil and anguish with scant support from Company officials and little return in terms of conversions. The missionaries had unfurled their banners and laid siege to the enemy's fortress but the walls of Jericho had not fallen.

Notes to Chapter VIII

1. Public letter to Bengal, 18 Feb 1814, paras 4 and 5, IOR E/4/678.
2. Butterworth to Taylor, 7 Jan 1820, WMMS MSS, Home Box 3.
3. Nott to Bogue, 16 Aug 1813, LMS MSS, SI(Gen) 2/1/B.
4. See correspondence in Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay Public Department Diary 360 and letters from Thomason to Hall and Nott, 13 Oct and 19 Nov 1813, IOR Board Collection 10461 in F/4/427.
5. Public letter to Bengal, 6 March 1815, IOR Board Collection 10461 in F/4/427.
6. Grant's Minute is contained in IOR Board Collection 10461A in F/4/427.
7. Public letter to Bombay, 9 March 1815, contained in IOR Board Collection 12032 in F/4/503.
8. Court Dissent to Board, no 2874, 1831 IOR E/2/11, 94-5.
9. Court Dissent to Board, no 2931, 31 May 1832, IOR E/2/11, 195-204.
10. Public letter to Bengal, 2 Feb 1831, paras 1-8, IOR E/4/731.
11. See, for example, copy letter from Elphinstone to Archdeacon Barnes, 13 May 1825, SPG MSS, East India Committee Book X49.
12. Judicial letter to Madras, 3 April 1833, paras 1-8, IOR E/4/942.
13. Judicial letter to Bengal, 2 Feb 1831, para 19, IOR E/4/731.
14. Eccles letter to Bengal, 11 Oct 1816, paras 1-7, IOR E/4/689.
15. Keith to LMS, 1 March 1817, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/2/A
16. See Chapter 3. The reality of conversions will not be discussed in this thesis. The terms baptism and conversion will be used interchangeably. By any measure the early missionaries had few 'conversions', apart from amongst the Shanars of Travancore and Tinnevely at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

17. Full r to Carey, Marshman and Ward, 14 Feb 1814, BMS MSS, H1/1.
18. Carey to [?], 22 Feb 1814 and Carey to Fuller, 4 Aug 1814, BMS MSS, IN/13.
19. PD, 22 June 1813, XXVI, 868-9.
20. Gogerly to LMS, 6 April 1821 and 6 Aug 1822, LMS MSS NI(B) 1/3/D and 1/4/C.
21. Mundy to LMS, 10 May 1823, LMS MSS NI(B) 1/4/D. See MA Laird, Missionaries and Education in Bengal 1793-1837, Oxford, 1972 for a very full discussion of this issue.
22. Thomason to CMS, 1 Nov 1815, CMS MSS CI 1/E1.
23. Copy letter, W Carey to J Carey, 16 July 1822, AL MSS.
24. May to Forbes, 4 July 1815, enclosed with May to LMS, 3 Aug 1815, LMS MSS NI(B) 1/1/C.
25. May's report of his schools, July 1816, LMS MSS, NI(B) 1/1/D.
26. Pearson's report of his schools, 5 Oct 1816, LMS MSS NI(B) 1/3/A.
27. Hill and Gogerly to LMS, 26 Feb-3 March 1827, LMS MSS NIJ, Box 1.
28. Hill to LMS. 4 June 1824, LMS MSS NI(B) 2/1/A.
29. Hill to LMS, 27 March 1826, NI(UP) 1/1/D.
30. 11th report of LMS Bengal Auxiliary Missionary Society, 1829, LMS MSS, NI(B) 2/4/A.
31. Piffard to LMS, 22 Jan 1829, LMS MSS NI(B) 2/4/C.
32. Lacroix to LMS, 20 May 1830, LMS MSS, NI(B) 3/1/A.
33. See for instance, CMS Committee Minutes, XII, 267. For a discussion of the Bengal Renaissance see N S Bose, The Indian Awakening in Bengal, Calcutta, 1960 and D Kopf, British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance, Berkeley, 1969.
34. Corrie to Hare, 19 May 1813, CMS MSS CI 1/E1.
35. Fisher to Cheap, nd, MS MSS, CI 1/M1.
36. Chamberlain to Carey, 30 Nov 1814 and Carey to Ryland, 15 Nov 1815, BMS MSS, IN/24 and IN/13.



37. Chamberlain to Carey, 30 Nov 1814, BMS MSS, IN/24.
38. Leonard to Marshman, 11 Nov 1816, BMS MSS, IN/28.
39. East India Committee Minutes, 6 Feb 1817, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/1/A.
40. Smith to Ryland, 21 Jan 1814, SCL, VIII (1814-15), 8 and Peter to Ward, 17 March 1814, BMS MSS, IN/28.
41. Bengal Eccles letter, 4 Jan 1821, paras 21-31, IOR E/4/106. See M Laird, Missionaries and Education in Bengal, London, 1972, 123 et seq.
42. Bengal General letter, 30 Sep 1825, paras 54-57, IOR E/4/116.
43. Bengal Judicial letter, 18 Dec 1830, para 19, IOR E/4/134.
44. Thomason to CMS, 9 May 1814, CMS MSS CI 1/E1.
45. Stewart to CMS, 3 Dec 1818, CMS MSS CI 1/E2/1.
46. Thomason to CMS, 1 Nov 1815, CMS MSS CI 1/E1.
47. Fletcher to WMMS, 22 March 1821, WMMS MSS Box 433.
48. CMS to Rhenius, 21 Jan 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/E2.
49. Hill to LMS, 4 June 1824, LMS MSS, NI(B) 2/1/A.
50. Calcutta Annual Report, 25 Sep 1823, LMS MSS NI(B) 1/4/E.
51. See SPG MSS now held in Rhodes House, Oxford, especially the SPG East India Journals, East India Committee Books and the SPG Annual Reports.
52. Transactions of the Missionary Society, III (1 13), 82.
53. See IOR Board Collection 10532, IOR F/4/432.
54. Donaldson to LMS, 19 Sep 1817, LMS MSS, NI(Guj) 1/1/A.
55. Skinner to LMS, 18 April 1818, LMS MSS, NI(Guj) 1/1/B.
56. W Fyvie to LMS, 20 Nov 1818, LMS MSS, NI(Guj) 1/1/B.
57. Elphinstone to Suares, 3 Nov 1818, cited in K A Ballhatchet, Social Policy and Social change in Western India 1817-30, London, 1957, 83-4.

58. Horner to WMMS, 28 Dec 1819, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
59. Fletcher to WMMS, 7 April 1821, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
60. Taylor to LMS, 14 March 1823, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/3/B.
61. Mitchell's Journal, 1 June 1831 and 9 Jan 1833, CMS MSS, CI 3/M1.
62. Fletcher to WMMS, 22 March 1821, WMMS MSS, B x 433.
63. Fletcher to Rev J Taylor, 16 May 1821, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
64. Taylor and Joseph to LMS, 18 Jan and 2 June 1826, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 2/1/B.
65. Taylor and Beynon to LMS, 19 Sep 1832, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/3/B.
66. Mitchell's Journal 29 Jan 1833 and June-Sep 1832, CMS MSS CI 3/M.
67. See S B Kaufmann [now Bayly], 'Popular Christianity, Caste and Hindu Society in South India, 1800-1915: A Study of Travancore and Tirunelveli', unpublished PhD, Cambridge, 1979 and her article 'A Christian Caste in Hindu Society: Religious Leadership and Social Conflict Among the Paravas of Southern Tamil Nadu' in Modern Asian Studies, XV (1981).
68. R Caldwell, Records of the Early History of the Tinnevelly Mission of the SPCK and SPGFP, Madras, 1904, 71.
69. Hough to Madras Corresponding Committee, 6 Dec 1819, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 111-12.
70. Rhenius' Journal, 23 Oct 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 613.
71. Rhenius' Journal, 14 Aug 1823, CMS MSS CI 2/M3, 392.
72. Schmid's Journal, 19 March 1824 and April-June 1824, CMS MSS CI 2/M3, 487 and 560.
73. Rhenius' Journal, 7 Feb 1824, CMS MSS CI 2/M3 530.
74. Rhenius' Journal, 26 Oct 1824, CMS MSS CI 2 M4, 151.
75. Rhenius' Journal, 2 March 1825, CMS MSS CI 2 M4, 231.
76. Rhenius' Journal, 24 May 1825, CMS MSS CI 2/M4, 281-2.
77. Appendix to the Tinnevelly Mission Report for 1825, CMS MSS CI, 2/M4, 328.

78. Rheniu ' Journal, 31 May 1825, CMS MSS CI 2/M4, 283.
79. Appendix to the Tinnevely Mission Rep rt for 1825, CMS MSS CI 2/M4, 333.
80. Rhenius' Journal, 21 July 1827, CMS MSS CI 2/M5, 556.
81. Rhenius' Journal, [?] June 1828, CMS MSS CI 2/M6, 257.
2. Rhenius' Journal, 6 Dec 1828, CMS MSS CI 2/M6, 513-4.
83. Rhenius' Journal, 20 March 1829, CMS MSS CI 2/M7, 59.
84. Rhenius' Journal, 28 March 1829, CMS MSS CI 2/M7, 60.
85. Rhenius' Journal, 22 June 1826, CMS MSS CI 2/M5, 11.
86. Rhenius' Journal, 24 Feb 1829, CMS MSS CI 2/M7, 55.
87. Munro to CMS, cited in P Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians and the Church Missionary Society 1816-40, Kottayam, 1935, 340-1.
88. Munro to Norton, 29 May 1817, cited in Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians, 368. The Jacobite Christians were descendants of the original Syrian Christians under the authority of Antioch. The Romo-Syrians had been converted to Roman Catholicism by the Portuguese.
89. See Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians, Chapter VII; K V Eapen, A Study of Kerala History, Kottayam, 1986, 164-8 and C M Agur, Church History of Travancore, Madras, 1904, in addition to the correspondence held in the CMS and LMS archives.
90. Munro to the Rani, cited in Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians, 89.
91. Mead to the LMS, 4 April 1818, LMS MSS, SI (Trav) 1/1/A.
92. Norton to CMS, 4 March 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 381.
93. Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians, 143.
94. See S B Bayly, 'Hindu Kingship and the Origin of Community: Religion, State and Society in Kerala, 1750-1850', Modern Asian Studies, XVIII (1984), 177-213.
95. M D uall to Bailey, 27 Aug 1819, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 73.
96. Norton to CMS, 4 March 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 3 3.
97. McDouall to Bailey, 27 Aug 1819, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 74.

98. Bailey to Mortlock, 24 March 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 350
99. ibid and Fenn to CMS, 26 Feb 1820, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 97.
100. 'Correspondence Relative to the Cotym Missionaries' Alleged Interference in Secular Affairs', CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 32 et seq.
101. Thompson's Half-Yearly Report of the Quilon Stations [1828?], LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/A.
102. Thompson to LMS, 5 Dec 1828, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/B.
103. Norton to Mortlock, 28 Dec 1819, CMS MSS CI 2/M1, 246.
104. Addis to LMS, 12 Jan 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/C.
105. Report of Nagercoil Station, Jan-June 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/C.
106. Mault to LMS, 6 Jan 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/C.
107. Mead to LMS, 23 June 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/D.
108. Mead to LMS, 12 Jan 1833, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 2/2/B.
109. Undated Report by Mault [1828?], LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/A.
110. Mead to LMS, 13 Oct 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/3/D.
111. Mead to LMS, 22 June 1830, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/4/B..
112. Report of Nagercoil Station, July-Dec 1829, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/4/A.
113. Bailey to Bannister, Oct 1829, CMS MSS CI 2/M7, 345.
114. Fenn to Thompson, 6 April 1821, CMS MSS 2/M2, 8.
115. Norton to CMS, 11 Dec 1821, CMS MSS CI 2/M2, 221.
116. Bailey's Journal, 18 May 1821, CMS MSS CI 2/M2, 544.
117. Crow to LMS, 24 Sep 1825, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/2/C.
118. Miller to LMS, 5 Dec 1827, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/2/E.  
At this time, neither public officials nor missionaries understood the complexity of Indian society. Both seemed to believe that there was an homogeneous entity, 'the Brahmins'.

119. Mault and Addis to LMS, 8 July 1830, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/4/A.
120. Bailey to Bannister, Oct 1829, CMS MSS CI 2/M7, 345.
121. Mead to LMS, 22 June 1830, LMS MSS, SI(Trav) 1/4/B.
122. Hands' Journal, 22 Sep and 13 Oct 1817, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
123. Chambers to LMS, 26 Aug 1822, LMS MSS, SI Can) 1/2/C.
124. Laidler to LMS, 12 May 1824, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/3/D.
125. Laidler, Chambers and Campbell to LMS, 8 Oct 1824, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/4/A.
126. Chambers, Campbell and Laidler to LMS, 15 May 1825, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/4/B.
127. 22 April 1825, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/4/B
128. Laidler and Chambers to LMS, 19 April 1824, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/3/D.
129. Laidler and Massie to LMS, 1 Aug 1826, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 2/1/D.
130. Campbell to LMS, nd [1831], LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/2/B.
131. Campbell to LMS, 15 June 1832, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/3/A.
132. Campbell to LMS, 2 Jan 1833, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/4/B.
133. England to WMMS, 12 May 1829, WMMS MSS, Madras Correspondence III, Box 434.
134. England to WMMS, 21 June 1830, WMMS MSS, Madra C rrespondence III, Box 434.
135. En land to WMMS, 23 Feb 1832, Madras Corresponden e III, Box 435.
- 1 . CMS C mmittee Minutes, 10 Oct 1817, III, 181-3.
137. WMMS Report for Madras Station, 10 July 1824, WMMS MSS, Box 54.
138. 'The Present State f the Madras Mission', N v 1826, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
139. Report of Madras Ea tern Division, igne by Smith to LMS, 14 O t 1 3, LMS MSS, SI Tam) 5/2/A.

140. Taylor to LMS, 26 Oct 182 , LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 2/2/B.
141. signed by Rev C Blackman, CMS MSS, CI 2/M9, 415.
142. See Devasagayam's Journal 1821-2 in CMS MSS, CI 2/M1, 551, 179-87 and CI 2/M2, 407 and 459.
143. Transactions of the Missionary Society, III (1813), 93.
144. Journal of Gordon and Pritchett, 25 July 1813, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
145. Transactions of the Missionary Society, IV (1818), 102
146. Gordon's Journal, 2 June 1822 - 1 Jan 1823, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
147. 'Answers to Printed Queries', 12 Jan 1824, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/2/A.
148. Gordon's Journal, 6 Oct 1822, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
149. Lee's Journal, 30 July 1814, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
150. Lee's Journal, 2 March 1817, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
151. Hands' Journal, 24 May 1810, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2 .
152. Reeve to LMS, 29 Sep 1818, LMS MSS, SI(Can)1/1/B.
153. Reeve's Journal, 31 Aug - 30 Dec 1818, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
154. 'Answers to Directors Printed Queries', 4 Jul 1824, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 1/3/C.
155. Hands to LMS, 26 Aug 1825, LMS MSS, SI(Can)1/4/B
156. Howell's Journal, 1 and 16 Aug 1823, LMS MSS, SIJ, Box 2.
157. Howell to LMS, 1 Jan 1825, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/2/C.
158. Howell to LMS, 21 Feb 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/4/D.
159. H well to LMS, 22 June 1832 and 3 Oct 1832, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/5/B.
160. Smith to LMS, 19 July 1832, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 4/ /B.
161. H well to LMS, 22 June and 3 Oct 1832, LMS MSS SI Tel) 1/5/B.

162. Casamajor to CMS, 23 Aug 1832, CMS MSS, CI 2/M9, 381-2.
163. Bannister to CMS, CMS MSS CI 2/M6, 393.
164. Devasagayam's Journal, [?] Sep 1822, CMS MSS, CI 2/M2, 477.
165. Gosling to CMS, 18 Oct 1822, CMS MSS, CI 2/M3, 168.
166. Crisp to LMS, 28 Nov 1827, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 2/3/C.
167. Crisp to LMS, 27 Feb 1826, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 2/2/B.
168. Thompson to CMS, 26 Sep 1816, CMS MSS, CI 2/E1.
169. Extract dated 5 Oct 1816, CMS MSS, CI 2/E1.
170. Thompson to CMS, 10 Oct 1817 and extract of Madras Public letters 23 Dec 1817 and 15 May 1818 contained in CMS MSS, Committee Minutes, III, 271 and 402-3.
171. Thompson to CMS, 9 July 1818, CMS MSS, Committee Minutes, III, 460-62.
172. Public letter to Bengal, 2 Feb 1831, IOR, E/4/731.
173. Rhenius' Journal, 23 Oct 1820, CMS MSS. CI 2/M1, 613.
174. 24 June 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/1/B.
175. Howell to LMS, 21 Feb 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/5/B.
176. Beynon and Taylor to LMS, 29 Sep 1832, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/3/B.
177. Fletcher to WMMS, 7 April 1821, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
178. Munro to Canning, 1 May 1823, Canning Papers, 'Political Correspondence. India, Sheeps ar Library, MSS 99.

Conclusion: Ezekiel's Dry Bones

On the one hand we are restrained and confined by the political authorities, on the other are libelled and censured by the ecclesiastical authorities . . . In this state what are missionaries to do?'

By 1833 the missionaries were all too painfully aware that their message of hope and redemption was touching few people. The bones of India were very dry and when they shook it was more likely to be in opposition to the missionaries than because they had heard the word of the Lord.

Although there had been a nearly threefold increase in the number of Protestant missionary societies and a corresponding growth in the number of mission stations since 1813, conversions were depressingly few. In 1829, Gogerly of the LMS reported the baptism of their first Hindu convert in Calcutta. Mundy in Chinsurah in 1833 wrote that there was not one convert residing there after after over thirty years' presence in the area. The Bellary mission took twelve years to achieve its first converts. Vizagapatam fared even worse, having to wait from 1805 until 1826. The Methodists closed their missions in Bombay, Bangalore and Calcutta because of the lack of success. These are far from isolated examples. The Protestant mass conversions in Tinnevely at the beginning



of the nineteenth century were the exception rather than the rule.

Conversions, when they took place, were predominantly among relatively poor, low-caste groups. Susan Bayly's work on Tinnevely and Travancore has shown that conversion had taken place without arousing opposition. The Paravas and Syrian Christians sought and obtained improved status in society through their conversions and became absorbed into a Hindu order without too much difficulty.<sup>2</sup> However, the possibility of mass conversions, backed by the new and powerful colonial authority able to dispense economic favours, threatened social dislocation on a massive scale. Not surprisingly, local elites intimidated would-be converts and even threatened the missions themselves with violence in order to maintain their control over labourers, share-croppers and other elements of the poor who might have asserted their independence through conversion. Missionary support of their converts' claims and their attempts to involve government on their side heightened the opposition. The charge that there were designs on the part of the British authorities forcibly to convert the population was also an easy method of arousing mass public support and was occasionally used to legitimise power struggles against the British. To stress all this is not to deny that pious Hindus and Muslims were outraged by the doctrine of infidel Christians, especially when they

actually succeeded in detaching a young Brahmin or other high caste conversion.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to discuss why Indians opposed missionary activity. It is, however, important to appreciate that there was considerable resistance. With few exceptions in this period, Indians were either completely apathetic or reacted adversely to the missionaries' attempts to convert them. The previous chapter has demonstrated the abuse and violence that converts and even the missionaries themselves had to withstand. This made Company officials in general more cautious than ever in allowing missionaries a free rein in India.

The missionaries, for their part, were only too aware of their dependence on official support. The evangelical 'success' of 1813 had changed little in India. Missionaries were still not at liberty to preach, form churches and travel exactly where they wished. The vastness of India and the distance from Britain gave great leeway to local officials to determine exactly what their relationship with missionaries should be. Sympathetic officials, such as Munro in Travancore and Forbes and Bayley in Bengal, could do much to help the missionaries and ensure that converts were not harassed. On the other hand, an unsympathetic, or over-cautious official could do

much to hinder progress. The LMS missionaries at Madras had noted that

when pious gentlemen are ruling Christian natives are well-treated and given public stations. In all other stations they are denied notice and protection.

By the 1820s the missionaries had come to believe that, once again, the Company must be forced to do more for them by Parliament. They were particularly concerned about the Company's continuing involvement in 'idolatrous festivals', which it had come to believe was the biggest single obstacle to the spread of the Gospel in India, counteracting everything that they did.<sup>4</sup> From very early times, the East India Company had developed a policy of showing respect for the religion of the people through official attendance at Hindu festivals and by levying a tax on the devotees attending certain Hindu shrines. The object of the tax was to provide for the upkeep of these temples and their priests so that the dignity of the Hindu deities was seen to be upheld by government.<sup>5</sup> Even Lord William Bentinck, the great 'reformer' felt that it was the "bounden duty" of a "Government ruling over a Hindu and Mussulman community and professing to respect their religion and customs, to manifest a friendly feeling, and to afford every protection and aid towards the exercise of those harmless rites associated with the religions of India" that were not opposed to the dictates of humanity".

Many Christians were horrified at such government 'involvement' in idolatry and their struggle against this was one which continued throughout British dominion of India. What they could not accept was that the East India Company regarded Hinduism as the 'established' religion of the country which therefore had a right to be supported by government. As early as 1817, Gordon, an LMS missionary at Vizagapatam wrote that he was "often asked by the natives why they have to give up their shasters while the Company supports native temples."<sup>7</sup> In subsequent years missionaries often reported similar occurrences and the fact that "the natives frequently refer to this fact, and adduce it as proof, that, whatever missionaries might say the Government decidedly approve and sanction the popular idolatry."<sup>8</sup>

Coupled with the missionary belief that government support of idolatrous practices was a very great sin was a concern for the implications of a number of laws and regulations on Christian converts. The Hindu and Muslim laws of inheritance effectively disinherited Christian converts. Madras Regulation VI of 1816, an order strictly forbidding the employment of any except Hindus or Muslims in the native courts as agents or conductors of suits, was regarded by the missionaries as injurious to the prestige of Christianity as the loss of caste itself. The missionaries felt that it was in effect a complete bar to

the employment of Christians in public office because "the law operates extensively by implication and unless repealed it will always offer a serious obstacle to the general spread of Christianity." Missionaries were also not happy with the law "having been made so soon after the last charter gave sanction to missionaries coming to India" by a government under Mr Elliot who was "declaredly hostile to missionary exertion". This, they argued, made it "understandable to presume that it was purposely planned and privately expounded in such a way as to lead to the expectation that Christianity would not be able to overcome the barriers it would oppose".<sup>9</sup> The danger seemed all the greater to the missionaries "when viewed in connection with the prohibition against admitting natives who have embraced the Christian religion into the army, or allowing them to remain there after becoming converts."<sup>10</sup>

By 1831 the missionaries had become convinced that "nothing will be conceded by the present government but shall have to be wrenched from it by the public voice . . . . Missionary privileges ought to be known and respected" By 'present government' they meant the Court of Directors and the Company administration in India. The missionaries urged their societies "to call upon the Legislature to place Christianity in Hindostan on the same footing as idolatry."<sup>11</sup> The Company's charter was once more due for renewal and the missionaries were determined to avail

themselves of the opportunity. In a 'Plea to the Christians of England', the pilgrim tax was likened to the slave trade 'traffic in souls' and the Christians of England were called upon to demand "the abandonment of a policy so weak in the sight of the nation and heathen and against the majesty of heaven", pointing out that Indians were now fellow subjects.<sup>14</sup> Reeve quoted with approbation someone who had written that

the cycle has brought us to the time when the English public is periodically awakened into a momentary interest respecting India. We mean to avail ourselves of the moment, to catch it as it flies, and to beg for a hearing at least once in twenty years in the name of humanity and justice to plead for 80 millions of human beings.<sup>15</sup>

Turner, as Bishop of Calcutta, was just as concerned as the Dissenters about the "covert, though well-known hostility" of the Company towards Christianity in India. He told Daniel Wilson, his successor, that he deprecated "most earnestly any interference on the part of the Government with missionary exertions" and stressed the "necessity of rousing public attention, and fixing it steadily on the vast importance of the question now to be raised as to the nature and extent of the obligations under which Great Britain lies bound to India, Christian Britain to Heathen India." Turner had become convinced that there was but "one true line of policy" and that was the active propagation of Christianity with the full support of government. Echoing Grant's early arguments for the social

and political utility of the conversion of India to Christianity, he told Wilson that only a "common faith" could bind Indians to the British. The diffusion of "the true knowledge of divine truth" was, therefore, "politically, a good measure" and "everything which delays or hinders such diffusion is politically a blunder."<sup>14</sup>

Lord Gambier, president of the CMS, sent a forceful letter to the Court of Directors, expressing similar sentiments. The Company and British government were attacked for disregarding their Christian duty and severely censured for the grievous sin of government support of idolatry. Christianity, he argued, would make Indians useful members of society and the most loyal of subjects. Indians would "in proportion as they become intelligent and consistent in the Christian Profession, . . . become useful members of society, and have a better influence on the heathen around them."<sup>15</sup>

The Court fought a hard battle against any inflexible command to stop government support of Hindu festivals and temples. In a letter to Charles Grant in June 1833, it declined "to originate instructions on the subject of idolatrous practices" because it was "at variance with the compact of the British government with the people of India". It did not wish to send out specific instructions that Christians were not to be involved in Hindu festivals,

nor did it think it expedient to stop the collection of pilgrim taxes where this practice had been carried on for some time.<sup>16</sup> The Board of Control, nevertheless, in 1833 ordered the Company to discontinue any management of Hindu temples and the collection of pilgrim taxes.

As in 1813, the missionaries regarded the 1833 charter as a success story and were confident that a different policy would be pursued as regards the propagation of Christianity in India. However, like the 'pious clauses' in 1813, this was not as total a success as appeared at first sight. Discretion was left with the presidency governments, which were slow to carry out the instructions of the Board. It took another thirty years before the last temples were handed over to Hindu management. The Board of Control had allowed the Company an escape by stating that the order was the standard to which the presidency governments should ultimately conform, bearing in mind individual circumstances and not a rule for instant adoption. The methods to be employed in carrying out the order were left entirely to the discretion of the governments involved.<sup>17</sup> In a statement that echoes William Carey's of 1814, Drew, a missionary at Madras, "rejoiced to learn that the Pilgrim Tax had been abolished" but went on to add that "it may serve to illustrate the despotic character of the Government of this country, that so little has been said on the subject, and so slight has been the expression of



public feeling that one can scarcely believe that it has really happened."<sup>18</sup> By the 1820s, the 'degradation' of India did not seem to grip the imagination of the public in the way it had in 1813. In 1823-4, 103 petitions were presented to Parliament, mostly from Dissenters, for the abolition of sati. In 1830 there were six petitions, again mainly from Dissenters, insisting on the abolition of the pilgrim tax.

During the period 1793-1833, missionaries were never given the unrestricted right of movement and action they had demanded in 1813. Problems remained both with officials on the spot and the Court of Directors at home. Although after 1813, the Court of Directors and Board of Control never refused licences to missionaries and permitted them to sail in Company ships, they continued their cautious line towards missionary activity and never wavered from their stated policy of 'religious toleration' or non-interference with Indian religions. Indeed, they seemed to be distancing themselves still further from any connection with missionary activity, to the extent that, by 1833, the Indian administration was forbidden from employing missionaries to perform the duties of chaplain unless there was a dire necessity.<sup>19</sup> An Ecclesiastical letter of 29 September 1834, although specifically referring to jurisdiction over chaplains, demonstrates that no change had occurred in the Company's attitude towards missionary

activity despite the religious clauses in the charters of 1813 and 1833. This despatch stated that

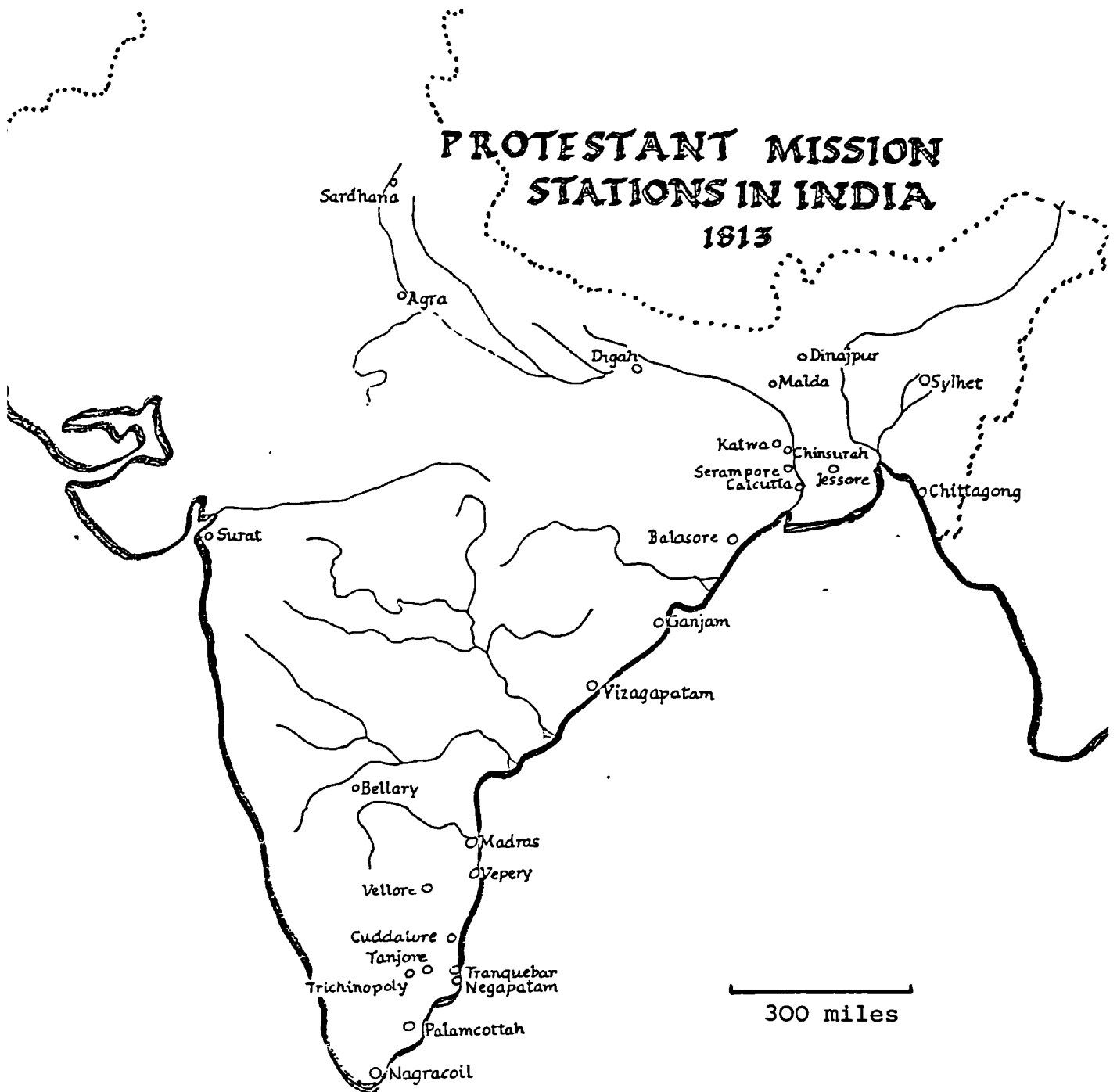
. . . interference with non-Christians could never be left to the personal discretion of individual chaplains uncontrolled by any authority . . . it was a temporal matter in which the safety of the Empire was concerned and it was necessary that it should be carefully looked to and strictly controlled by the Government which could never divest itself of that imperative duty.<sup>40</sup>

### Notes to Conclusion

1. Fletcher to WMMS, 7 April 1821, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
2. S B Kaufmann, 'Popular Chgristianity, Caste and Hindu Society in South India, 1800-1915: A Study of Travancore and Tirunelveli', unpublished PhD thesis, Cambridge, 1979 and her article 'A Christian Caste in Hindu Society: Religious Leadership and Social conflict among the Paravas of Southern Tamil Nadu' in Modern Asian Studies, XV (1981) and S B Bayly, Hindu Kingship and the Origin of Community: Religion, State and Society in Kerala, 1750-1850, Modern Asian Studies, XVIII (1984).
3. Fletcher to WMMS, 7 April 1821, WMMS MSS, Box 433.
4. Crisp to LMS, 6 Oct 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 4/2/B.
5. For a discussion of this see K Ingham, 'The English Evangelicals and the Pilgrim Tax in India, 1800-1862', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, III (1952), 191-200.
6. Cited in Ingham, 'Pilgrim Tax', 198.
7. Gordon to LMS, 2 Dec 1817, LMS MSS, SI(Tel) 1/1/A.
8. Crisp to LMS, 6 Oct 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 4/2/B.
9. Crisp's remarks contained in Report of LMS Madras Mission, 17 March 1821, LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 4/1/A.
10. Gogerly to LMS, 29 Feb 1831, LMS MSS, NI(B) 3/2/A.
11. Campbell to LMS, 24 June 1831, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/2/B.
12. Drew to LMS, nd [1833], LMS MSS, SI(Tam) 5/1/B.
13. Reeve to LMS, 23 Oct 1830, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 3/1/B.
14. Copy letter Turner to Wilson, 15 Feb 1831, SPG MSS, C Ind.I(1)25J.
15. Copy letter Gambier to EIC, 1 Sep 1817, CMS Committee Minutes, 8 Sep 1817, III, 66-7.
16. Court Dissent No 3063, 13 June 1833, IOR E/2/12.
17. Court Public letter to Bengal, 2 Feb 1831, paras 1-14, IOR E/4/731.
18. Drew to LMS, 26 Nov 1833, LMS MSS, SI(Can) 5/2/B and Carey to Fuller, 4 Aug 1814, BMS MSS IN/13.

19. Eccles letter to Bengal, 20 Nov 1833, para 1, IOR  
E/4/739.

20. Bengal Eccles letter, 29 Sep 1834, para 20, IOR  
E/4/147.

Appendix 1

## Appendix 2

# PROTESTANT MISSION STATIONS IN INDIA

1833



Appendix 3Protestant Missionaries in India, 1706-1833

The dates cover the period during which the individuals concerned served as missionaries in India. The dates of departure or death after 1833 are generally not mentioned. Some individuals served with more than one missionary society.

Royal Danish

B Ziegenbalg	1706-1719
H Plutschau	1706-1711
J E Grundler	1709-20
B Schultze	1719-1743
J A Sartorius	1730-1738
J E Geister	1732-1746
J Z Kiernander	1740-1799
J P Fabricius	1740-1791
J C Breithaupt	1747-1782
C F Schwartz	1750-1798
G H C Hutteman	1750-1781
C W Gericke	1767-1803
J P Rottler	1776-1836
C Pohle	1777-1818
D Schreyvogel	1803-1840
J W Gerlach	1776-1791

Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge

J C Kohlhoff	1778-1844
I G Holtzberg	1797-1824
C H Horst	1792-1810
J J Schollkopf	1777-1777
J C Diemer	1774-1792
J D Jaenicke	1788-1800
C W Paezold	1793-1817
W T Ringeltaube	1797-1799; 1804-7
C A Jacobi	1813-1814
J G P Sperschneider	1819-1826
L P Haubroe	1819-1830
D Rosen	1819-1838

Baptists

W Carey	1793-1834
J Thomas	1793-1801
J Fountain	1796-1801
W Grant	1799-1799
D Brunnsden	1799-1801
W Ward	1799-1823
J Marshman	1799-1837
Felix Carey	1800-1807

J Chamberlain	1803-1821
J Rowe	1803-1823
J Biss	1803-1807
W Moore	1803-1844
R Mardon	1803-1812
J Chater	1806-11
W Robinson	1806-53
I Fernandez	1804-30
W Carey (Junior)	1808-1852
Carapeit Aratoon	1809-1857
J Peter	1809-1820
W Johns	1812-1813
J Cornish	1810-1813
H Peacock	1810-1820
J Lawson	1812-1825
O Leonard	1812-1848
J T Thompson	1812-40
W Thomas	1813-1870
D Da Cruz	1812-27
J C De Bruyn	1812-17
L Mackintosh	1812-58
J Carey	1814-24
W Smith	1814-1859
W Yates	1815-1845
O' Silva	1815-1818
E Carey	1814-1824
J Randall	1816-1819
J Penney	1817-1839
W H Pearce	1817-1840
J T Ricketts	1817-1818
W Adam	1818-1821
H Sutton	1818-1823
J Marshman	1819-1827
C Lacey	1823-1852
A Sutton	1825-1854
J Johannes	1820-1864
J Mack	1821-1845
J Harle	1821-1822
J Stratham	1820-1827
R Richards	1821-1828
A Hampton	1823-1824
J Williamson	1823-1866
J C Fink	1822-1856
J Peggs	1822-1825
A Leslie	1824-1870
J G Albrecht	1824-1825
T Swan	1825-1827
W Kirkpatrick	1824-1829
W Robinson	1826-1837
R Burton	1825-1828
C Fenwick	1825-1830
G Pearce	1826-1887
W Buckingham	1827-1831
J Rae	1829-1837



J D Ellis	1831-1845
J Lawrence	1831-1874
H Beddy	1831-1849
A B Lish	1832-1852
F de Monte	1833-1859

London Missionary Society

N Forsyth	1798-1816
G Cran	1804-1809
W T Ringeltaube	1804-1816
W C Loveless	1805-1824
J Taylor	1805-1806
W Lee	1809-1817
J Gordon	1810-1828
J Hands	1810-
E Pritchett	1811-1820
J Thompson	1812-1812
R May	1812-1818
J Dawson	1815-1832
J Taylor	1815-
W Fyvie	1815-
J Skinner	1815-1821
J Keith	1816-1822
H Townley	1816-1822
R Knill	1816-1819
C Mead	1816-
W Reeve	1816-
S Render	1816-1818
J D Pearson	1817-1831
J Harle	1817-1821
J Donaldson	1817-1818
J Hampson	1819-1820
S Trawin	1819-1827
T Nicholson	1819-1822
C Traveller	1819-1823
G H Ashton	1819-
C Mault	1819-
J Smith	1820-1824
A Forbes	1820-1821
S Laidler	1820-1827
M T Adam	1820-1830
G Mundy	1820-
E Ray	1820-1831
W H Bankhead	1821-1822
H Chambers	1821-1826
W Howell	1821-
A Fyvie	1822-
E CRisp	1822-
T Brown	1822-1822
J Hill	1822-1833
M Hill	1822-
J B Warden	1822-1826
J W Massie	1823-1827

J E Nimmo	1823
W Crow	1823-1 25
W Campbell	1824-
W Taylor	1 24-
G Walton	1824-
J Edmonds	1824-1826,
C Piffard	1825-
W Beynon	1825-
T Salmon	1825-1833
A Lillie	1826-1827
B H Paine	1826
J Robertson	1826-1833
A F Lacroix	1827
W B Addis	1827-
W Miller	1827-
J C Thompson	1827-
H Crisp	1827-1831
R Jennings	1827-1831
J Adam	1828-1831
G Christie	1830-1832
T K Higgs	1830-1832
J Reid	1830
W Buyers	1831
W Harris	1831 1832
J Paterson	1832-
W H Drew	1832
C Miller	1833
J Campbell	1833
R C Mather	1833
J A Shurman	1833

#### Church Missionary Society

J C Schnarre,	1814-1820
C T E Rhenius	1814-
C G Schroeter	1815-1820
W Greenwood	1815-1828
T Norton	1815-
B Bailey	1816-
T Daws n	1816-1818
D Schmid	1817-1820
B Schmid	1817-
J Adlington	1817-1828
H Baker	1818-
G T Barenru k	1818-1831
J Fenn	1818-1826
J A Jetter	1819-1824
W J Deerr	1819-
T Morris	1820-1829
B La Roche	1820-1821
J Per wne	1820-1827
J Ri sdale	1820-1831
R Kenney	1820-18 6

W Bowley	1820-
I Wilson	1820-1828
J Bailey	1820-1823
A Messih	1820-1827
W Sawyer	1822 1829
J W Doran	1825-1830
W Mitchell	1826
J Steward	1826-1828
J Kindlinger	1827-1829
J Winckler	1827-
P P C Schaffter	1827-
J Latham	1827-1830
C Friend	1828-1828
R Eteson	1828-1831
J Morewood	1829-
J B Dixon	1829
T Sandys	18 0-
C Blackman	1830
J Marsh	1830-1831
S Lema	1830-
J Devasagayam	1830-
J Weitbre ht	1830-
J Thompson	1830-
E Dene	1830-
P Fjellstedt	1831-
H C Kruckeberg	1831-
J J Muller	1831-
W Morse	1832-
J Haberlin	1832-
C G Knorpp	1832-
B C Leupolt	1832-
J Lincke	1832-
J Peet	1833-
G Pettitt	1833-
J Tucker	1833-
H Snashall	1833-

Wesleyan Missionary Society

J Horner	1816-1822
J Lynch	1816-1824
T Close	1818-1823
J Fletcher	1819-1822
E Hoole	1820-1828
T H Squance	1 20-1822
J M watt	1820-
J Katts	1822-1826
A Stead	1823-1824
J F England	1824-
R Carver	18 5-
T J Williams n	1825-1827
A Bourne	1827-
J J Martens	1827-
S Hardey	18 8-

T Cryer 1829-

Scottish Missionary Society

D Mitchell 1823  
 J Mitchell 1823-  
 A Crawford 1823-  
 J Cooper 1823-  
 J Steven on 1824-  
 R Nesbit 1827-  
 J Wilson 1829-

Church of Scotland

A Duff 1830-

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

W H Mill 1821-  
 T Chri tian 1823-1827  
 W Tweddle 1824-1832  
 W Morton 1825-1830  
 M G Sarjant 1825-1825  
 F Holmes 1826-  
 M R de Mello 1826-  
 C Craven 1826-1827  
 W Birrell 1827-1828  
 J L Irion 1828-  
 P M D Wissing 1828-1831  
 J Heavyside 1830-1831  
 G D Haughton 1830-1831  
 E J Jones 1833-  
 J Bowyer 1833-  
 D Jones 1833-  
 J J Carshore 1833-  
 C Calthorp 1833-

Schreyv gel, Haubroe, Kohlhoff, Rottler and Rosen transferred from the SPCK in 1826.

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

S Nott 1812-1815  
 S Newell 1812-1821  
 G Hall 1812-1826  
 H Bardwell 1816-1821  
 J Nicholls 1818-1824  
 A Graves 1818-  
 J Garrett 1821  
 E Frost 1823-1825  
 C St ne 1827-  
 D O Allen 1827-

Netherlands Missionary Society

J Kindlinger	1821-1827
A F Lacroix	1821-1827
J C Winckler	1823-1827
J L Irion	1823-1827

In 1827, Kindlinger and Winckler transferred to the CMS, Lacroix to the LMS and Irion to the SPG.

Jews Society

M Sargon	1821-
----------	-------

Sources: F Penny, Church in Madras, 3 vols, 1904-22;  
E D Potts, British Baptist Missionaries in India,  
Cambridge, 1967 and K Ingham, Reformers in India, 1793-1833, Cambridge, 1956.

Appendix 4CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1812/131812January

The Saints set up a committee to consider strategy.

February

Parliamentary Select Committee set up.

March

Wilberforce tries to interest Church of Scotland.

April

Wilberforce approaches the SPCK.

Conference at Butterworth's of all 'interested parties'.

Decided that each sect should apply separately to Perceval and the chief members of the House of Commons.

Memorials from LMS and PSPRL to Government.

Dissenting Deputies decide to support the cause.

CMS public meeting (400, including 8 MPs and peers).

May

CMS and Dissenting Deputies wait on Government.

Perceval assassinated.

LMS annual meeting. Resolved to petition Parliament, the Regent and memorialise the Board of Control.

Church of Scotland appoints a committee to watch over its interests.

June

SPCK resolutions sent to the Government and Company.

July

Wilberforce asks Liverpool and Vansittart to see CMS deputation.

October

CMS decision to found associations "throughout the Empire".

1813January

LMS print 1000 copies of a paper about India.

CMS encouragement to Buchanan to write his Colonial Ecclesiastical Establishment.

February

Baptist and CMS deputations to Lord Liverpool

Church of Scotland and SSPCK petition Parliament.

March

Baptists and PSPRL wait on Lord Buckinghamshire and CMS and PSPRL on Lord Liverpool. PSPRL asks for exemption from all restraints.

Lord Castlereagh introduces government proposals for the renewal of the charter. No 'pious clause'.

Public meetings in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London.

Liverpool and Buckinghamshire accede to Board of Control licensing.

April

Protestant Dissenting Deputies, BMS, LMS, PSPRL and CMS have separate meetings to discuss petitioning.

Examination of witnesses by Lords and Commons.

Teignmouth waits on Moira.

100,000 copies of CMS suggested petition sent out.

April and May intense efforts to whip up favourable vote in both Houses by Wilberforce and Pratt.

May

Wilberforce & CMS deputation meet Buckinghamshire who "acceded to our terms."

Committee of Whole House to consider resolutions from Select committee. A 'pious clause' included.

June

Resolution 13 proposed and adopted pro forma.

Buchanan's Apology for Promoting Christianity in India printed

Resolution 13 considered. Passed 89:36.

July

2nd reading of Resolution 13. 54:32 for original clause.

Attempt to introduce a clause for C of S establishment.

Defeated 20:18.

EIC agreed to allow for 3 Presbyterian chaplains.

3rd reading. 48:13 for original clause.

Bill passed in House of Lords and received Royal Assent.

Appendix 5East India Company Charter 53.G.3.c.155Section 33 [Resolution 13]

And whereas it is the Duty of the Country to promote the interests and happiness of the native inhabitant of the British dominions in India, and such measures ought to be adapted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement, and in furtherance of the the above objects, sufficient facilities ought to be afforded by law to persons desirous of going to and remaining in India, for the purpose of accomplishing those benevolent designs so long as the authority of the local governments respecting the intercourse of Europeans with the interior of the country be preserved, and the principles of the British government on which the natives of India have hitherto relied for the free exercise of their religion be inviolably maintained: And whereas it is expedient to make provision for persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for the above purposes . . . that where and as often as any application shall be made to the said Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, within one month of receipt thereof . . .

Section 33 also made provision for a right of appeal to the Board of Control should the Court of Directors refuse permission to any person wishing to "proceed to the East Indies, for introducing among the native inhabitants of British India useful knowledge and moral improvement . . .

Section 49 [Resolution 12]

Provided for the establishment of a bishopric and three archdeacons for British India, to be paid for by the Company out of territorial revenues.



HOUSE OF COMMONS PETITIONS, APRIL - JUNE 1813

## Abbreviations:

Gen	from inhabitants generally
Meth	Wesleyan Methodists
Diss	Dissenters generally
BMS	Supporters of the Baptist Missionary Society
MS	Supporters of the Missionary Society
CE	Church of England
Scot	Church of Scotland, Scottish Dissenters and inhabitants generally

<u>Date</u>	<u>Gen</u>	<u>Meth</u>	<u>Diss</u>	<u>BMS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>CE</u>	<u>Scot</u>	<u>Total</u>
9/4			1					1
13/4	2		1	2				5
14/4		3	1	1				5
27/4			9	6			1	16
28/4	3		12	1	1		3	20
29/4	41			20			2	63
30/4	15	1	2	11	1			30
1/5				1				1
3/5	13			11		1		25
4/5	28			14				42
5/5	13		6	16		1	2	38
6/5	14			56		1	2	73
7/5	33			33				66
10/5	25	2	1	10			3	41
11/5	11			4			4	19
12/5	26		1	17			2	46
13/5	29	1	1	22	1			54
14/5	9			1			1	11
17/5	41			1			1	43
18/5	25		2	2			4	33
19/5	11			3				14
20/5	3			1				4
21/5	9			7		1		17
24/5	4		2	12	2			20
25/5	3			5				8
26/5				1			3	4
27/5	2			2				4
28/5	7			6				13
31/5	15	1	1				2	19
1/6	5			5				10
2/6	1							1
3/6	10		1	6	12			29
10/6	14				26			40
11/6	12		1		32		1	46
12/6	4				4			8
14/6	4				2			6
15/6	2				2			4
18/6						1		1
21/6				3			5	8
22/6	4			1			1	6
28/6					1			1
	438	8	42	281	84	6	36	895

## Bibliography

### UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

#### A. MISSIONARY

Baptist Missionary Society, 93-97 Gloucester Place, London, W1

(1) Missionary correspondence has been arranged in boxes according to author.

(11) Minute Book 1799-1805. The Minute Books from 1806 have not survived.

British and Foreign Bible Society, Cambridge University Library.

Committee Minutes.

Lord Teignmouth's letter book.

Correspondence arranged chronologically according to author.

Proceedings of the Calcutta Corresponding Committee, 1807-18.

Church Missionary Society, Birmingham University Library.

Committee Minutes, vols I-XIII.

India General, CI/E 1-2,

Secretaries' Letter Books, CI 1/L1-2, CI 2/L1, CI 3/L1.

North India Mission, CI 1/M1-4.

South India Mission, CI 2/M1-9.

Western India Mission, CI 3/M1.

London Missionary Society, School of Oriental and African Studies

Correspondence has been arranged chronologically according to areas: North India, Bengal, Gujerat and United Provinces; South India Canarese, Tamil, Telugu, Travancore. Board Minute and Home Correspondence are also arranged chronologically.

Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, School of Oriental and African Studies

Home Correspondence, Boxes 1-24,

Home and General Correspondence Circulars, B x 46.

Correspondence with Government Departments, Box 49.

Letters about the formation of the Leeds Missionary Society, B x 59.

General Minutes, B x 545-8.

India Synod Minutes, B x 354.

Madras Correspondence I-IV, Boxes 432-35.  
Various Papers, mainly correspondence with politicians, Box 664.

Religious Tract Society, School of Oriental and African Studies.

Minutes, 1799-1812.

Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone Road, London NW1.

Minutes of the Committee for Correspondence with the Diocesan and District Committees, and the East India Mission Committee Minutes.

United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Rhodes House, Oxford.

Correspondence C IndI (1-9).  
East India Committee Books 1827-32.  
East India Journals 1818-33.  
Journals 1799-1823.

Bristol Baptist College, Woodlands Road, Bristol.

Letters from Wilberforce to Ryland.

College Street Baptist Church MSS, Delapre Abbey, Northampton

Collection of letters from William Carey to John Ryland.

Lambeth Palace Library

Moore Papers, Horsley Papers, Fulham Papers and Bishop P r teus' Memoranda and Recollections, 1790-1807.

National Library of Scotland

Letter Book of the Bombay Corresponding Committee, Scottish Missionary Society, Nov 1822-Dec 1827, MS 8988.

Regents Park College, Oxford

A useful collection of copy letters of Andrew Fullers' correspondence.

Serampore College, Serampore.

W Pearce, 'On the extent and Character of Conversations t Christianity from Among the Natives in the Presidency o Be al', unpublished paper prepared for the Calcutta Missionary Conference, nd.

## B. PRIVATE PAPERS

Bedford County Record Office

Whitbread Papers, MS WI/5102.-22

Bodleian Library, Oxford

Wilberforce Papers, MS c.3 and d.13-7  
 Letters from Grant and Parry. MS Eng.Hist.c.210.  
 Secret letter from R Dundas to G Barlow, 11 Dec 1807, MS  
 Eng,Misc.b.345.

Bishop's College, Calcutta

MSS, title deeds and printed documents relating to  
 missionary conferences, reports of progress and the settling  
 up of schools. These relate to all the missionary  
 societies working in the Calcutta area.

Bristol City Library

Letters from Wilberforce to John Sandrett Harford, Harford  
 MSS 28048.

British Library

Dropmore Papers, Add MSS 58857 - 58878  
 Warren Hastings Papers, Add MSS 29182 - 29234  
 Liverpool Papers, Add MSS 38190 - 38456  
 Melville Papers, Add MSS 41085  
 Wellesley Papers, Add MSS 37281 - 37315  
 Stowe Papers, Add MSS 758

Cambridge University Library

Thornton Family Papers Add MSS 7674/1/L4; 7674/1/L5

Devon County Record Office

Sidmouth Paper, MSS 152M. Correspondence relating to his  
 proposed bill to tighten up the Toleration Acts, C1809-  
 13/OE. Letters from Addington Circle, C1811-21/OZ.

Durham University Library, Department of Palaeography and  
Diplomatic

Grey Papers, B x 11, file 12 - letters 1811/12 about  
 toleration for Dissenters. B x 36, file 1, papers on India  
 and the East India Company.

Durham County Record Office

Londonderry Papers MS D/LO/ 34.

Edinburgh University Library

Haldane mission proposal letters, Laing MSS II.500.  
 Letter from C Buchanan to C Stewart, Laing MSS II.500.

House of Lords Record Office

Petitions for the promulgation of Christianity in India,  
 1813, MSS 641-5.

India Office Library

Adam Papers, Eur MS F109  
 Amherst Papers, Eur MS F140  
 William Fullerton Elphinstone Papers, Eur MS F88  
 Mountstuart Elphinstone Papers, Eur MS F89  
 Melville Papers, Eur MS D1074.  
 Munro Papers, Eur MS F151

John Rylands University Library, Manchester

Thomas Allen MSS, Boxes 4 and 5.  
 Letters from Thomas Coke and Thomas Thompson to various  
 people, MSS MAM.PLP

National Library of Scotland

Letter Book of Robert S Dundas, MS 1063  
 Cornwallis to Henry Dundas, MS 3385  
 Henry Dundas to Cornwallis, Shore and Wellesley, MS 3387  
 Henry Dundas to Wellesley MS 1062  
 Gilbert Elliot, first Earl of Minto, Papers, MS 11080 -  
 11740  
 Sir J Mackintosh to D Whishard, MS 2521.  
 Church of Scotland Papers, MS 7530  
 Haldane mission proposal letters, MSS 2257 and 3648.

National Library of Wales

Wynn Papers, (Charles Watkins W Wynn), MS 1084D.  
 Coed Y Maen, Bundle 20, 21, 32, 33,34.  
 Isaac Mann Collection, MS 1207E, Baptist letters.  
 14 letters from Lady Anne Erskine to Thomas Haweis, MS  
 7794E.

Northampton Record Office

52 letters from Carey to Ryland, College Street Baptist  
 Church MSS.

Nottingham University Library

Portland MSS (Lord William Bentinck), PwJb.47-727 and  
 PwJf.2899-2901.

Ridley Hall, Cambridge

Correspondence between Charles Simeon and Charles Grant and  
between Thomas Thomason and J W Sherer.

Sheepscar Library, Leeds

Canning Papers

Scottish Record Office

Melville Papers, MSS GD51.

St Andrews University Library

Thomas Chalmers correspondence, MS 30385.

Wilberforce House, Hull

Wilberforce Papers.

## C OFFICIAL RECORDS

India Office Library and Records

Registers and Indexes	Z
Minutes of Court of Directors	B
General Correspondence	E
Board of Control	F
Home Miscellaneous	Home Misc
Departmental Collections	
Political and Secret	L/PS
Parliamentary	L/Parl
Proceedings	
Bengal Public; Secret and	
Political	
Madras Public; Secret	
Bombay Public; Secret	

Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay

Political and Secret Diary No 192.  
Public Department Diaries 357-438.

Tamil Nadu State Archives

Secret Sundries, Vols 1-13A.

## II. PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

### A. MISSIONARY

Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and  
the East (including the Annual Reports), 1814-38.

Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1805-1813.

Reports of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1813-25.

Reports of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1709-1833. Periodical Accounts relative to a Society Formed Among the Particular Baptists for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen, 1800-1818.

Serampore Circular Letters, 1808-22. Transactions of the London Missionary Society, 1796-1833.

Reports of the London Missionary Society from Its Formation in the Year 1795 to 1814 Inclusive, London, 1814.

## B. OFFICIAL

### 1. Parliamentary Papers

1812-3

II, Charter Renewal Bill.

VIII, Missions; Christians in Malabar;  
Pilgrim Tax; Moral Character of  
Indians.

IX, Hindu Religion, Jaganath.

X, Charles Grant's Observations on the State of  
Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain.

1831-2

I, Minutes of Evidence.

V, Military.

IX, Native Christians, Education, Sati.

### 2. Parliamentary Records

The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Times to the Year 1803.

The Parliamentary Register.

The Senator or Clarendon's Parliamentary Chronicle, (First Series).

Cobbett, W (subsequently Hansard, T C, ed), The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803.

3. Journals of the House of Commons, 1793-1833.

4. Journals of the House of Lords, 1793-1833.

## C. CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Annual Register, 1793-1813.

Asiatic Annual Register, 1807.

Aston's Manchester Commercial Advertiser, March-June 1813

Baptist Magazine, 1809-13.

Christian Observer, 18 2-1 13.  
Cowdray's Manchester Gazette, March-June 1813.  
Edinburgh Review, 1803-13.  
Evangelical Magazine, 179 -1813. [Missionary Chronicle was added to the title in 1813.]  
Friend of India, 1818-1828.  
Methodist Magazine, 1812-13.  
Missionary Herald, 1819-33.  
Gentleman's Magazine, 1793-1813.  
Missionary Magazine, 1796-1813  
Missionary Register, 1813-14.  
Northampton Mercury, March-June 1813  
Nottingham Review, March-June 1813  
Quarterly Review, 1809-1833.  
Trewonan's Exeter Flying Post, March-June 1813  
The Diary or Woodfall's Register, June 1793  
The Evening Mail, June 1793  
The Gazeteer and Daily and Advertiser, June 1793  
The Sun, June 1793  
The Times, March-June 1813

#### D. PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

##### 1. Journals, Letters, Memoirs

Brown, Mrs D, ed, Memorial Sketches of the Rev David Brown with a Selection of his Sermons Preached at Calcutta, London, 1816.  
 Burder, G, Missionary Anecdotes, London, 1811  
 Burder, H F, Memoir of the Rev George Burder, London, 1833  
 Carey, E, Memoir of William Carey, London, 1836  
 Carus, W, ed, Memoirs of the Life of the Rev Charles Simeon, 2 vols, 2nd edn, London, 1847.  
 Countess of Minto, ed, Lord Minto in India, London, 1880.  
 Fuller, A G, The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller, with a Memoir of his Life, 5 vols, London, 1846.  
 Foster, J, ed, The Works of Robert Hall, AM with a Brief Memoir of His Life by Dr Gregory and Observations on his Character as a Preacher, 6 vols, London, 1841.  
 Gleig, G R, The Life of Major General Sir Thomas Munro, 3 vols, London, 183 .  
 Hoby, J, Memoir of Rev William Yates DD, London, 1847.  
 Hee, E, Personal Narrative of a Mission to the South of India from 1820-1838, London, 1 9.  
 Kewle, J D, Memoir of Mrs Ann Judson, late Missionary to Burmah, including a History of the American Baptist Mission in the Burman Empire, 6th edn, Boston, 18 5.  
 Mackintosh, R J, Life of the Rt Hon Sir James Mackintosh, 2 vols, 2nd edn, London, 1 6.  
 Martin, M, ed, Despatches, Minutes and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley, 5 vols, London, 1 36-7.  
 Marshman, J C, The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward, 2 vols, London, 1 59.



Matheson, J. J., A Memoir of Greville Ewing Minister of the Gospel, London and Glasgow, 1843.  
Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, 4 vols, London, 1840.  
Memoir of the Life and Correspondence of John Lord Teignmouth, 2 vols, London, 1843.  
 Morison, J., The Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society with a Brief Sketch of Methodism and His Notices of the Several Protestant Missions from 1556 1839, 2 vols, London, nd.  
 Pearce R. R., Memoirs and Correspondence of Marquess Wellesley, 3 vols, London, 1846.  
 Pearson, H., Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev Claudius Buchanan, DD, 2 vols, ?, 1817.  
 Prideaux, H., The Life of the Rev Humphrey Prideaux . . . ., London, 1748.  
 Sargent, J., Memoir of the Rev Henry Martyn, 7th edn, London, 1822.  
 Sargent, J., The Life of Rev T. T. Thomason, MA, ?  
 Wesley, J., The Works of the Rev J. Wesley AM, 14 vols, London, 1872.  
 Wilberforce, R. I. and S., The Life of William Wilberforce, 5 vols, London, 1838.  
 Wilberforce R. I. and S., The Correspondence of William Wilberforce, 2 vols, London, 1840.  
 Wilberforce, S., Journals and Letters of Henry Martyn BD, 2 vols, London, 1837.  
 Yates, W., Memoirs of John Chamberlain, Calcutta, 1824.

## 2. General

Anon., A letter to the Deputies of Protestant Dissenting Congregations, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster: On Their Intended Application to Parliament, For the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, London, 1787.  
 Bennett, J., History of the Dissenters in the Last Thirty Years, London, 1839.  
 Bogue D. and Bennett J., History of the Dissenters from the Revolution in 1688 to the Year 1808, 4 vols, London, 1808-12.  
 Bowen, J., Missionary Incitement and Hindoo Demoralization Including Some Observations on the Political Tendency of the Means Taken to Evangelize Hindoostan, London, 1821.  
 Buchanan, C., An Apology for Promoting Christianity in India, London, 1811.  
 Buchanan, C., Christian Researches in Asia, Cambridge, 1811.  
 Buchanan, C., Colonial Ecclesiastical Establishment, London, 1813.  
 Buchanan, C., On the Expediency of Establishing an Ecclesiastical Establishment, London, 1815.  
 Buchanan, C., Sermons on Interesting Subjects, Edinburgh, 1812.

- Butler, J, The Analogy of Religion. Natural and Revealed . . ., London, 1828.
- Carey W, An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen, facsimile copy of the original issued in 1792.
- Fuller, A, An Apology for the Late Christian Missions to India. . . ., second edn, London, 1808.
- R Hall, Address to the Public on an Important Subject Connected with the Renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, London, 1813.
- Horne, M, Letters on Missions Addressed to the Protestant Ministers of the British Churches, reprint, Andover, 1815.
- Hough, J, History of Christianity in India, 5 vols, London, 1845-60.
- Jones W, Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society 1799-1847, London, 1850.
- Kaye, J W, Christianity in India: An Historical Narrative, London, 1859.
- Kaye, J W, Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe, 2 vols, London, 1854.
- Kaye, J W, Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, 2 vols, London, 1856.
- Kindersley, N E, A Letter to the Earl of Buckinghamshire on the Propagation of Christianity in India, London, 1813.
- Marshman, J, Advantages of Christianity in Promoting the Establishment and Prosperity of the British Government in India Containing Remarks Occasioned by Reading a Memoir, London, 1813.
- Morris, J W, ed, Miscellaneous Pieces on Various Religious Subjects being the Last Remains of Andrew Fuller, London, 1826.
- Owen, J, The History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 3 vols, London, 1816.
- Pratt, J H, ed, Eclectic Notes, London, 1856.
- Raikes, R, Considerations on the Alliance Between Christianity and Commerce, London, 1825.
- Shere, F J, Notes on Indian Affairs, 2 vols, London, 1837.
- Sibree, J and Canton, M, Independency in Warwickshire, Coventry and London, 1855.
- Sikes, T, A Second Letter to Lord Teignmouth, London, 1810.
- Twinning, T, A Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company on the Danger of Interfering in the Religious Observances of the Natives of India, London, 1807.
- Waring, J S, A Reply to a Letter Addressed to John Scott Waring in Refutation of the Illiberal and Unjust Observations and Strictures of the Anonymous Writer of that Letter, London, 1808.
- Waring, J S, Observations on the present state of the East India Company. . . ., 3rd edn, London, 1807.
- [Shoeb, John, first Baron Teignmouth], Considerations on the Practicability, Policy and Obligation of Communicating to the Natives of India the Knowledge of Christianity with Observations on the 'Prefatory Remarks' to a Pamphlet Published by Major Scott Waring, London, 1808.

Wilberforce, W, A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in this Country Contrasted with Real Christianity, London, 1797.

Wilks, J, An Apology for the Missionary Society, London, 1799.

A collection of 54 pamphlets on the controversy on the merits of the B&FBS vs the SPCK and 20 pamphlets on the 1807-8 'Pamphlet War' are held with the B&FBS archives, Cambridge University.

## E PUBLISHED SECONDARY SOURCES

### 1. General

Abbey, C J and Overton, J H, The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, London, 1887.

Agur, C M, Church History of Travancore, Madras 1904.

Allen, W O B and McClure, E, Two Hundred Years in the History of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge 1698-1898, London, 189 .

Altick, R D , The English Common Reader, Chicago, London and Toronto, 1957.

Anstey, R The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, London and Basingstoke, 1975.

Balleine, G R, A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England, London, 199 reissue.

Ballhatchet, K A, Social Policy and Social Change in Western India 1817-30, London, 1957.

Bartlett, C J, Castlereagh, London, 1966.

Basu, B D, Rise of Christian Power in India, 2nd edn, Calcutta, 1931.

Beaglehole, T H, Thomas Munro and the Development of Administrative Policy in Madras 1792-1818, Cambridge, 1966.

Bearse, G D, British Attitudes Towards India 1784-1858, Oxford, 1961.

Berg, J van den, Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Inquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period 1698 and 1815, Kampen, 1956.

Bose, N S, The Indian Awakening in Bengal, Calcutta 1960.

Boxer, C R, The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415-1825, London, 199.

Boyd, R H S, A Church History of Gujerat, Madras 191.

Bradshaw J, Rulers of India. Sir Thomas Munro and the British Settlement of the Madras Presidency, 2nd impression, Oxford, 196.

Briggs, A, The Age of Improvement, 2nd impression, London and New York, 190.

Brown, F K, Fathers of the Victorians, Cambridge, 1961.

Billk, F W B, Evangelical Conversion in Great Britain. 1696-1845, St Leonards-on-Sea, 199.

- Butler, I, The Eldest Brother: The Marquess Wellesley 1760-1842, London, 1973.
- Caldwell, R, Records of the Early History of the Tinnevely Mission of the SPCK and SPGFP, Madras, 1881.
- Cambridge History of India, vol V, 1929.
- Carey, S P, William Carey 1761-1834, 5th edn, London, 1924.
- Cannon, J, ed, The Whig Ascendancy, London, 1981.
- Chadwick, W O, The Victorian Church, vol I, London, 1966.
- Cheriyian, P, The Malabar Syrians and the Church Missionary Society 1816-40, Kottayam, 1935.
- Chinnian, P, The Vellore Mutiny 1806 (The First Uprising Against the British), Erode, 1982.
- Clarke, J C D, English Society 1688-1832, Cambridge, 1985.
- Clarke, W K L, A History of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London, 1959.
- Cnattngius, H, Bishops and Societies: A Study of Anglican Colonial and Missionary Expansion 1698-1850, London, 1952.
- Cookson, J E, The Friends of Peace, Cambridge, 1982.
- Cowherd, R G, The Politics of English Dissent, New York, 1956.
- Das, S K, The Shadow of the Cross: Christianity and Hinduism in a Colonial Situation, New Delhi, 1974.
- Davis, D B, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture, Cornell, 1966.
- Davis, R W, Dissent in Politics, 1780-1830: The Political Life of William Smith MP, London, 1971.
- Derry, J W, Castlereagh, London, 1976.
- Drescher, S, Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective, Basingstoke, 1986.
- Eapen, K V, Church Missionary Society and Education in Kerala, Kottayam, 1985.
- Eapen, K V, A Study of Kerala History, Kottayam, 1986.
- Elliott-Binns, L E, The Early Evangelicals: A Religious and Social Study, London, 1953.
- Embree, A T, Charles Grant and British Rule in India, London, 1962.
- Findlay, G G and Holdsworth, W W, The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, 5 vols, London, 1921.
- Fladeland, B, Abolitionists and Working Class Problems in the Age of Industrialisation, London, 1984.
- Forrester, D B, Caste and Christianity, London, 1980.
- Furber, H, Henry Dundas 1742-1811, Oxford, 1931.
- Furber, H, John Company at Work: A Study of European Expansion in India in the Late Eighteenth Century, Harvard, 1951.
- Gay, J D, The Geography of Religion in England, London, 1971.
- Gense, J H, The Church at the Gateway of India 1720-1960, Bombay, 1960.
- Gilbert, A D, Religion and Society in Industrial England, London, 1976.
- Halévy, E, A History of the English People in 1815, Vol III, Religion and Culture, London, 1924.

- Harrison, J F C The Second Coming, London, 1979.  
 Hennel, M, John Venn and the Clapham Sect, London, 1958.  
 Henriq e , U, Religious Toleration in England 1787-1833, London, 1961.  
 Hewat, E G K, Christ and Western India, Bombay, 1853.  
 Hinde, W, George Canning, London, 1973.  
 Holland, M J [Viscountess Knutsford], Life and Letters of Zacharay Macaulay, London, 1900.  
 Hollis, P, ed, Pressure From Without in Early Victorian England, London, 1974.  
 Howe, E M, Saints in Politics, Toronto, 1952.  
 Hull, E R, Bombay Mission History with a Special Study of the Padroado Question, Bombay, nd.  
 Hunt, N C, Two Early Political Associations. The Quakers and the Dissenting Deputies in the Age of Sir Robert Walpole, Oxford, 1961.  
 Hutchin , F G, The Illusion of Permanence, Princeton, 1967.  
 Ingham, K, Reformers in India 1793-1833, Cambridge, 1956.  
 Judd, J P, Members of Parliament, 1734-1832, London, 1935.  
 Keith, A B, ed, Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy 1750-1921, vol 1, Oxford, 1922.  
 Kitson-Clark, G The Making of Victorian England, London, 1962.  
 Kling, B B, The Blue Mutiny: The Indigo Disturbance in Bengal 1859-62, Philadelphia, 1966.  
 Koller, J M, The Indian Way, New York and London, 1982.  
 Kopf, D, British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance, Berkely, 1969.  
 Laird, M A, Missionaries and Education in Bengal 1793-1837, London, 1972.  
 Lambert, S, Bills and Acts, Cambridge, 1971.  
 Laqueur, T W, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850, Yale, Newhaven and London, 1976.  
 Latourette, K S, A History of the Expansion of Christianity 1800-1914, 7 vols, New York , 1937-45.  
 Lehmann, E A, It Began at Tranquebar, translated by M J Lutz, Madras, 1956.  
 Lewis, C B, John Chamberlain, Calcutta, 1876.  
 L vett, R, The History of the London Missionary Society, 2 v l , L nd , 1899.  
 Ma kichan, D, The Missionary Ideal in the Scottish Churches, Lon o , nd.  
 Mannin , L rd Be nard, The Protestant Dissenting Deputies, ambridge, 1952.  
 Marshall, P J, East India Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century, Oxford, 1976.  
 Marshall, P J, The Impeachment of Warren Hastings, x rd, 1 65.  
 M rtin, R H, Evangelicals United. Ecumenical Stirrings in Pre Victorian Britain 1795-1830, London, 19 3.  
 Mayhew, A, Christianity and the Government of India, L nd n, 1929.

- Meikle, H W , Scotland and the French Revolution, Glasgow, 1912.
- Meersman, A, The Franciscans in Tamilnad, Switzerland, 1962.
- Morris, H, The Life of Charles Grant, London, 1904.
- Moule, H C G, Charles Simeon, London, 1952 reprint [first published 1892].
- Neill, S, A History of Christian Missions, London, 1964.
- Neill, S, A History of Christianity in India 1707-1858, Oxford, 1985.
- Oddie, G A, Social Protest in India: British Protestant Missions and Social Reforms 1850-1900, New Delhi, 1979.
- Patterson, A T, Radical Leicester: A History of Leicester 1780-1850, Leicester, 1954.
- Payne, E A, The Baptist Union: A Short History, London, 1958.
- Payne, E A, The Church Awakes: The Story of the Modern Missionary Movement, London, 1942.
- Penny, F, The Church in Madras, 3 vols, London, 1904-22.
- Perkin, H, The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880, London, 1969.
- Philips, C H, ed, The Correspondence of David Scott, Director and Chairman of the East India Company Relating to Indian Affairs, 2 vols, London, 1951.
- Philips, C H, The East India Company 1784-1831, Manchester, 1961.
- Piggin, F S, Making Evangelical Missionaries, Sutton Courtenay, 1984.
- Pollock, J, Wilberforce, London, 1977.
- Potts, E D, British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837, Cambridge, 1967.
- Read, D, Press and People 1790-1850: Opinion in Three English Cities, London, 1961.
- The English Provinces 1760-1960, London, 1964.
- Richter, J, A History of Protestant Missions in India, translated by S H Moore, London, 1908.
- Robinson, W G, William Roby 1766-1830 and the Revival of Independency in the North, London, 1954.
- Roselli, J, Lord William Bentinck: The Making of a Liberal Imperialist 1774-1839, Sussex, 1974.
- Sargant, N, The Dispersal of the Tamil Church, Madras, 1940.
- Semmel, B, The Methodist Revolution, London, 1974.
- Slagg, J T, Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago, Manchester, 1881.
- Smith, G, Henry Martyn, Saint and Scholar, The First Modern Missionary to the Mohammedans 1781-1812, London, 192.
- Smyth, C, Simeon and Church Order, Cambridge, 1940.
- Sloway, R A, Prelates and People 1783-1852, London and Toronto, 1969.
- Stokey, E, The History of the Church Missionary Society, 4 vols, London, 1899-1916.
- Stokes, E, The English Utilitarians and India, Oxford, 1959.

Taylor, E R, Methodism and Politics 1791-1851, Cambridge, 1935.

Thoma, P D G, The House of Commons in the Eighteenth Century, Oxford, 1971.

Thomson, D, Nonconformity in Nineteenth Century England, London and Boston, 1972.

Thomson, E P, The Making of the English Working Class, London, 1968 Penguin edn.

Turberville, A S. The House of Lords in the Age of Reform 1784-1837, London, 1958.

Walvin, J, Slavery and British Society, London, 1982.

Ward, W R, Religion and Society in England 1790-1850, London, 1972.

Warren, M, I Believe in the Great Commission, London, 1976.

Warren, M. Social History and Christian Mission, London, 1967.

Warren, M, The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History, London, 1965.

Watson, J S, The Reign of George Third 1760-1815, Oxford, 1960.

Wearmouth, R F, Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century, London, 1945.

Webb, R K, The British Working Class Reader 1790-1848, London, 1955.

Webster, A B, Joshua Watson: The Story of a Layman 1771-1855, London, 1954.

Witz, C, Religionspolitik in Britisch Indien 1793-1813, Heidelberg, 1985.

Wood, S, The Inextinguishable Blaze: Spiritual Renewal and Advance in the Eighteenth Century, London 1960.

## 2. Articles

A Aspinall, 'The Cabinet Council, 1783-1835', Proceedings of the British Academy, XXXVIII (1953).

Bayly, C A, '"The Pre-history of Communalism"? Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860', Modern Asian Studies, XIX (1985).

Bayly, S B, 'Hindu Kingship and the Origin of Community: Religion, State and Society in Kerala, 1750-1850', Modern Asian Studies, XVIII (1984).

Benz, E, 'Pietist and Puritan Sources of Early Protestant World Missions (Cotton Mather and A H Francke)', Church History, XX (1951).

Best, G F A, 'The Whigs and the Church Establishment in the Age of Grey and Holland', History, XLV, (1960).

Best, G F A, 'The Evangelicals and the Established Church in the Early Nineteenth Century', Journal of Theological Studies, X, (1959).

Best, G F A, 'The Protestant Constitution and Its Supporters 1800-1829', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society VIII (1958).

- Bryant, G J, 'Pacification in the Early British Raj, 1755-1785', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, XIV (1985).
- Chambers, D, 'The Church of Scotland's Nineteenth Century Foreign Missions Scheme: Evangelical or Moderate Revival?', Journal of Religious History, IX (1976).
- Fisch, J 'A Pamphlet War on Christian Missions in India 1807-1809', Journal of Asian History, XIX (1985).
- Fisch, J, 'A Solitary Vindicator of the Hindus: The Life and Writings of General Charles Stuart', Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 19 5.
- Fraser, P, 'Public Petitioning and Parliament Before 1832', History, XVI (1961).
- Frykenberg, R E, 'New Light on the Vellore Mutiny', East India Company Studies. Papers Presented to Professor Sir Cyril Philips, K Ballhatchet and J Harrison, eds, Hong Kong, 1986.
- Hempton, D N, 'Evangelicalism and Eschatology', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXXI (1980).
- Gupta, M, 'The Vellore Mutiny 1806', Journal of Indian History, XLIX (1971).
- Hexter, J H, 'The Protestant Revival and the Catholic Question in England', Journal of Modern History, VIII (1936).
- Hobsbawm, E J, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution in Britain', History Today, VII (1957).
- Ingham K, 'The English Evangelicals and the Pilgrim Tax in India 1800-1862', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, III (1952).
- Kaufmann, S B, 'A Christian Caste in Hindu Society: Religious Leadership and Social Conflict among the Paravas of Southern Tamilnadu', Modern Asian Studies, XV (1981).
- Kitzan, L, 'The London Missionary Society and the Problem of Authority in India, 1798-1833', Church History, XL (1971).
- Kiernan, V, 'Evangelicalism and the French Revolution', Past and Present, No 1, 1952.
- Leys, C, 'Petitioning in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', Political Studies, III (1955).
- Linker, R W, 'The English Roman Catholics and Emancipation: The Politics of Persuasion', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXVII (1976).
- Martin, R H, 'The London Missionary Society in the Ecumenical Movement', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXXI (1980).
- Meriman, A, 'The Catholic Church in Tranquebar and Tanjore During the Formative Years of the Lutheran Mission', Indian Church History Review, I (1967).
- Mitra, SK, 'The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the Question of Christian Mission to India', Indian Church History Review, VIII (1974).
- Paine, E A, 'The Evangelical Revival and the Beginning of the Modern Missionary Movement', Congregational Quarterly, XXI (1943).



- Piggin, F S, 'Assessing Nineteenth Century Missionary Motivation: Some Considerations of Theory and Method', Studies in Church History, XV (1978).
- Piggin F S, 'Halevy Revisited. The Origins of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: An Examination of Semmel's Thesis', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, IX (1980).
- Piggin, F S, 'Secularism vs Ecumenism: The Impact on British Churches of the Missionary Movement to India, c 1800-1860', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXVII (1976).
- Porter, A. '"Commerce and Christianity": The Rise and Fall of a Missionary Slogan', The Historical Journal, XXVII (1985).
- Potts, E D, 'British Missionary Archives and the Asian Historian', Journal of Asian Studies, XXIV (1965).
- Sinha B K, 'Attitudes of the Christian Missionaries Toward the Land Problems of Bengal During the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', Journal of Indian History, LXVIII (1970).
- Smyth, C, 'The Evangelical Movement in Perspective', Cambridge Historical Journal, VII (1943).
- Talbot-Rice, E R, 'Sudden Anger or Premeditated Plot: Vellore and the Aftermath', The National Army Magazine 1985.
- Turner, M, 'The Bishop of Jamaica and Slave Instruction', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXVI (1975).
- Walker, R B, 'Religious Change in Cheshire 1750-1850', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XVII (1966).
- Walker, R B, 'Religious Changes in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XIX (1968).
- Walls, A F, 'A Christian Experiment: The Early Sierra Leone Colony', Studies in Church History, ??
- Walsh, J D, 'Methodism and the Mob', Studies in Church History, G Cumming and D Baker eds, VIII (1972).
- Walsh, J D, 'Origins of the Evangelical Revival', Essays in Modern Church History in Memory of Norman Sykes, ed G V Bennett and J D Walsh, London, 1966.
- Ward, W R, 'The Religion of the People and the Problem of Control 1790-1830', Studies in Church History, G Cumming and D Baker, eds, VIII (1972).

#### E. UNPUBLISHED ARTICLES AND THESES

- Ali, M M, 'The Bengal Reaction to Christian Missionary Activities 1830-1857', London PhD, 1963.
- Apinwall, B, 'William Smith MP, 1756-1835 and His Importance in the Movements for Parliamentary Reform, Religious Toleration and the Abolition of the Slave Trade', Manchester MA, 1982.
- Balala, W D, 'Shores of Influence: Simeon's Trust and Its Implications for Evangelical Patronage', Cambridge PhD, 1981.

- Best, G F A, 'Church and State in English Politics 1800-1833', Cambridge PhD, 1955.
- Braley, I, 'The Politics of Godlines : Evangelicals in Parliament 1784-1832', Oxford DPhil, 1974.
- Cameron, A D, 'The Vellore Mutiny', Edinburgh PhD, 1984.
- Chanellor, V E, 'The Ministry of All the Talents 1806-7: A Political Study', Oxford DPhil, 1978.
- Crosey, R, 'The Anachronism Nineteenth Century British Protestant Missionary Studies of Hinduism', Duke University PhD, 1966.
- Davidson, A K, 'The Development and Influence of the British Missionary Movement' Attitudes Towards India, 1786-1830', Aberdeen DPhil, 1973.
- Detzer, W, 'British and American Contribution to the Erweckung in Germany', Manchester PhD, 1974.
- Edwards, A L, 'The Social and Political Influence of Methodism in the Napoleonic Period 1789-1814', London PhD, 1943.
- Frazer, P, 'The Conduct of Public Business in the House of Commons 1812-27', London PhD, 1957.
- Frykenberg, R E, 'The Emergence of "Free" Religion Under the Company's Raj in South India', unpublished paper, Wisconsin, 1984, kindly shown to me by the author.
- Gaehle, J, 'An Historical Survey and Assessment of the Ecclesiastical and Missionary Policy of the East India Company', Oxford BLitt, 1968.
- Harrison, F M W, 'The Life and Thought of the Baptists of Nottinghamshire', 2 vols, Nottingham MPhil, 1972.
- Hjejle, B 'The Social Policy of the East India Company with Regard to Sati, Slavery, Thagi and Infanticide 1772-1858', Oxford DPhil, 1958.
- Hunt, E A, 'The North of England Agitation for the Abolition of the Slave Trade 1780-1800', Manchester MA, 1959.
- Kaufmann, S B, 'Popular Christianity, Caste and Hindu Society in South India, 1800-1915: A Study of Travancore and Tirunelveli', Cambridge PhD, 1979.
- Kirkland, W M, 'The Impact of the French Revolution on Scottish Religious Life and Thought with Special Reference to Thomas Chalmers, Robert Haldane and Neil Douglas', Edinburgh PhD, 1951.
- Krikerbcker, D R, 'The Popular Religious Tract in England 1790-1830', Oxford DPhil, 1981.
- Lewis, D M, 'The Evangelical Mission to the British Working Classes. A Study of the Growth of Anglican Support for a Pan-Evangelical Approach to Evangelicalism, with Special Reference to London, 1828-60', Oxford DPhil, 1981.
- Littleton, W H, 'Rev Richard Watson 1781-1833, His Work and Religious Thought', Edinburgh PhD, 1956.
- McCabe, J E, 'The Attitude of Edmund Burke (1729-1797) towards Christianity and the Churches', Edinburgh PhD, 1951.

- Murray, N U, 'The Influence of the French Revolution on the Church of England and its Rivals 1789-1802', Oxford DPhil, 1975.
- Nockles, R D, 'Continuity and Change in Anglican High Churchmanship in Britain 1792-1800', Oxford DPhil, 1975.
- Piggin, F S, 'The Social Background, Motivation and Training of British Protestant Missionaries to India 1789-1858', London PhD, 1974.
- Potter, S C, 'The Social Origins and Recruitment of English Protestant Missionaries in the Nineteenth Century', London PhD, 1975.
- Powell, A A, 'Contact and Controversy Between Islam and Christianity in Northern India, 1833-1857: The Relations Between Muslims and Protestant Missionaries in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh', London, PhD, 1983.
- Roxborough, W J, 'Thomas Chalmers and the Mission of the Church with Special Reference to the Rise of the Missionary Movement in Scotland', Aberdeen PhD, 1978.
- Sangster P E, 'The Life of the Rev Rowland Hill (1744-1833) and His Position in the Evangelical Revival', Oxford DPhil, 1964.
- Sen Gupta, K P, 'The Christian Missionaries in Bengal 1793-1833', London PhD, 1966.
- Stanley, B, 'Home Support for Overseas Missions in Early Victorian England c 1838-1873', Cambridge PhD, 1979.
- Stigant, E P, 'Methodism and the Working Class 1760-1821: A Study in Social and Political Conflict', Leeds MA, 1968.
- Terpstra, C, 'David Bogue DD 1750-1825, Pioneer and Missionary Educator', Cambridge PhD, 1979.
- Virgin, P N, 'Church and Society in Late Georgian England 1800-1840', Cambridge PhD, 1979.
- Walker, F C, 'History of Enthusiasm as a Factor in the Religious and Social Problems of the Eighteenth Century', London, PhD, 1930.
- Walsh, J D, 'The Yorkshire Evangelicals in the Eighteenth Century with Special Reference to Methodism', Cambridge DPhil 1956.
- Warner, W J, 'The Humanitarian Movement in England in the Eighteenth Century', London PhD, 1921.
- Werff, LLV, 'The Strategy of Christian Mission to Muslims. Anglican and Reformed Contribution in India and Near East from Henry Martyn to Samuel Zwemer 1800-1880', Edinburgh PhD, 1968.
- Whittaker, M B, 'The Revival of Dissent (1800-1835)', Cambridge MLitt 1959.
- Wood, A S, 'The Life and Work of Thomas Haweis 1734-1800', Edinburgh PhD, 1951.
- Willmer, H, 'Evangelicalism 1751-1835', Cambridge University Hulsean Prize Essay, no 134 (1963).

